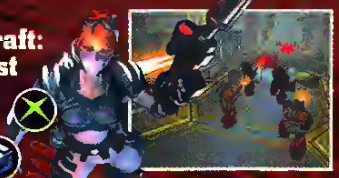

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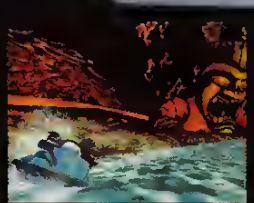


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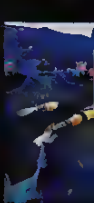


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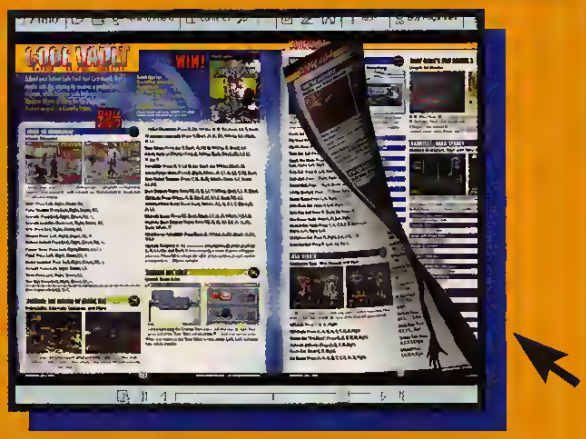
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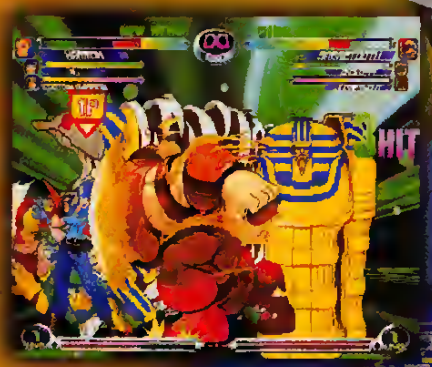
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It's that time of the year when you get a chance to share with us—and the world—your favorite games and enter to win a PlayStation2, GameCube, or Xbox!

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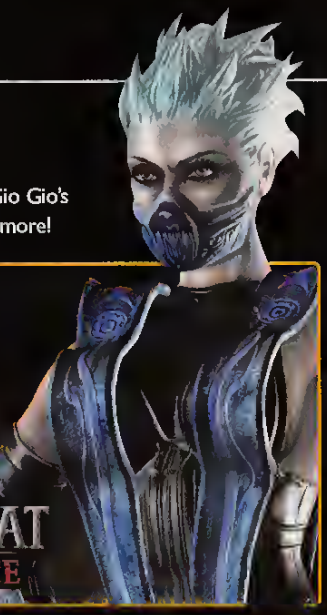
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This Month

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- Resident Evil 0 (GameCube)
- Grand Theft Auto: Vice City (PS2)
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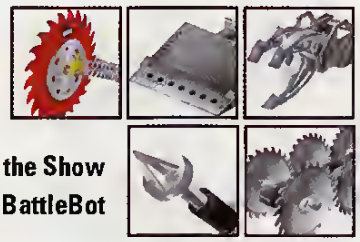
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EDITOR'S LETTER

Vote at GamePro.com, Now!

It's that time of the year when *GamePro* asks you to make the call! Inside this issue, you'll find *GamePro*'s 12th Annual Readers' Choice Awards ballot with which you can tell us (and eventually all your fellow readers) your favorite games of 2002. There were plenty of awesome choices for all game systems, but before you cast your votes, you should do some homework with this issue of *GamePro*.

For the PlayStation 2, Grand Theft Auto: Vice City's sure to steal a few hearts and minds in 2002. Mortal Kombat is making an impressive *Komeback* in Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance. And you really ought to check out Rygar: The Legendary Adventure, The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers, and Ratchet & Clank, too.

And, at last, Samus is among us as Metroid Prime represents for the GameCube by elevating all the classic tale's best qualities to another level. Mario Party 4, Resident Evil Ø, and James Bond 007: NightFire also pump major muscle into that system.

The Xbox rolls in with the much-hyped Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell... and this game delivers! In fact, the Xbox makes a serious bid for readers' choices this year with Shenmue II, Unreal Championship, Steel Battalion, and MechAssault also deserving of your attention.

The Game Boy Advance is making noise in 2002, too, thanks in large measure to The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past, Contra Advance: The Alien Wars EX, and maybe Kirby: Nightmare in Dreamland.

So make your choices now, but help us with the tallying (and save some trees) by casting your vote at www.gamepro.com/rca rather than through snail mail...that way we can guarantee that every vote will count.

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GameCube's Online Phantasies

I'm very excited about online gaming, but it seems that everything I read about it has to do with another online game for the PlayStation 2 like SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs or Twisted Metal: Black Online. Even the Xbox has Xbox Live! Why doesn't Nintendo have anything to say about online console games! I own a GameCube, but the PlayStation 2 is getting all the online stuff. When are we going to hear about the GameCube going online? When are we going to get that stuff?

▶ **Andrew Barlow–Via Internet**





Everyone's waiting to dial up the GameCube, and up to now Nintendo's been placing all calls in America on hold. The GameCube modem's been out in Japan for a couple of months now. Here, Sega's Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II is the first GameCube game to offer online support. At press time, however, Nintendo had very quietly shipped some modems to retail stores!

Your theory is intriguing, but a world without a Nintendo game system is difficult to imagine. On the surface, it's a little odd that Nintendo would cut loose one of its main second-party developers at a time when the GameCube can use as many quality games as it can get. Of course, Sega's strategy of controlling a formidable stable of internal developers is not going unnoticed by other game companies—most notably Sony, which with Insomniac, Naughty Dog, Incog, Sucker Punch, Zipper Interactive, its San Diego studios, and, yes, even 989 Studios, is building an impressive team of internal game makers.

The Sega Rules

Since it bowed out of the hardware business, Sega's stronger than ever and will continue to thrive. Its multiplatform presence gives Sega the edge it needs among game makers–it can migrate from platform to platform depending on the shifting market.

I can see Nintendo doing the same since it has sold off its interest in Rare. Nintendo's been outsourcing its titles, for example, to Rare for Star Fox Adventures, to Sega for F-Zero, and to Retro Studios for Metroid Prime. Maybe it's preparing to pull its game-making in-house. This is where Sega is ahead of Nintendo–it has about 10 internal teams that just thrive on creativity and the production of great games. In the next round, maybe the PlayStation 3 and the Xbox 2 will be the only systems around.

▶ **Scott Whitmore–Clarinda, IA**

Heart to Hearts

You know, *GamePro*, I'm sick and tired of everyone talking negative about Kingdom Hearts. I actually think that the Disney characters add an awesome twist to the game. You can fly with Peter Pan, vine-surf with Terzan, swim with the Little Mermaid (I forgot her name), and fly on the magic carpet with Aleddin! Without the Disney characters, you've still got another Final Fantasy but with a brand-new battle engine. I'll bet some of the Kingdom Hearts critics haven't even played the game. I think that gamers owe it to themselves to open their hearts (pun intended) and their wallets, and at least rent this game.

▶ **Ghetto4Lyfe–Via Internet**



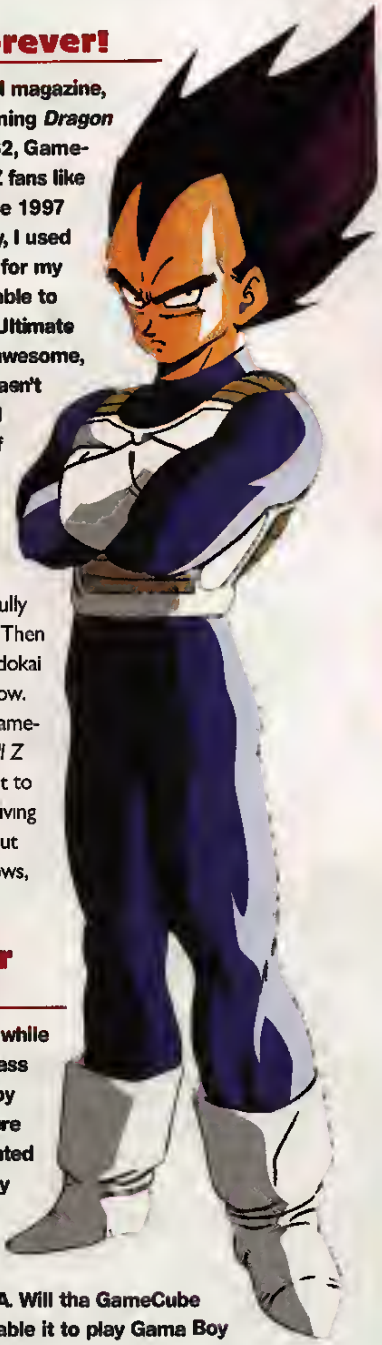


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Kingdom Hearts is a great RPG game, and kudos to Square for believing in an original concept. It's true the Disney characters showing up in a Square title had gamers scratching their heads at first. Even a few unnamed *GamePro* editors expressed their doubts...until they took the plunge and played the game. Princess Ariel (the Little Mermaid) has since forgiven them.

Dragon Ball Z Forever!



In issue 162 of your wonderful magazine, you talk about the up-and-coming *Dragon Ball Z* games for the GBA, PS2, GameCube, and Xbox. Hardcore DBZ fans like myself have been waiting since 1997 for another *DBZ* game. Luckily, I used to have a Japanese mod chip for my regular PlayStation, so I was able to enjoy DBZ Legends and DBZ Ultimate Battle 22. DBZ Legends was awesome, but DBZ Ultimate Battle 22 wasn't that great. Can you please tell me the official release date of the games for the PS2, GameCube, and Xbox?

▶ **Matthew Mathis–Pomona, NY**

Since you have Issue 162, hopefully you have issue 171 by now, too. Then you know that Dragon Ball Z Budokai for the PS2 is due out any day now. As for the new games for the GameCube, Xbox, and PC, *Dragon Ball Z* fans from around the world want to know when these games are arriving and Infogrames says...nothing. But rest assured, when *GamePro* knows, you'll know.

A GBA Player for The GameCube?

I bought a Game Boy Color a while ago for two reasons: It was less expensive than the Game Boy Advance, and at that time there weren't any GBA games I wanted to play. Now that isn't true any more. But while I'll be glad to dish out the cash for a GameCube, I don't necessarily want to purchase a GBA. Will the GameCube have an interface that will enable it to play Game Boy and Game Boy Advance games?

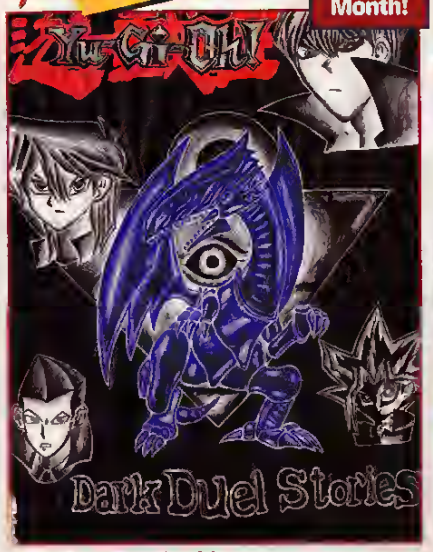
▶ **Nicholas Holce–Via Internet**

You should never say "never," but that's one of those great ideas that's never going to happen. The Game Boy systems are such great sellers that doing anything that might cannibalize would be very "unNintendo-like." If you like to play the long odds, however, lay a bet next to ours that Nintendo will issue a "museum" disc of its NES and arcade classics for the GameCube, much like the Namco Museum series for the PlayStation.

For more letters, go to GamePro.com!

Art Attacks!

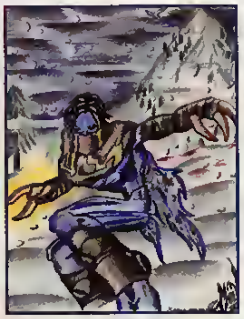
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Salvador Perez Jr.–CA



Taylor Hunt–CA



Miriel Andrew–P.R.

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— PSM, October '02

By The Watch Dog



After years of placing products in films and TV shows, corporate advertisers are now targeting us gamers. But do we want what they're selling? The Watch Dog takes a look at this rising trend in this month's installment of Buyers Beware.

Q I bought a Monster Cable for my Xbox—the GameLink 400 X, their top-of-the-line component cable—and it worked fine for a few months. Suddenly it only displays things in black and white. I've connected it and reconnected it, checked that the contacts were clean, made sure I had the plugs in the right jacks, everything—I only get shades of gray. My friend has a PS2 S-Video cable from Monster and it died, too. These things cost $50 and $60 each, and are supposed to be the best on the market—they shouldn't break EVER, let alone in a matter of months!

Matt Neffer—Waukegan, IL



A That really bites, Matt, but most likely the reason you're cable is damaged is because you're inserting and removing it from your Xbox too much; ditto with your friend's S-Video cable. According to a customer service rep at Monster Cable Products, "The more you plug it in and out the more of a chance there is that you'll break a connection. The connecting RCA ends are soldered on, and they can wiggle off if you insert and remove it repeatedly." If your GameLink cable has been damaged, you may be able to get it replaced by calling Monster Cable Products at 415/840-2000.

Q In Super Monkey Ball, all of the bananas you collect are from Dole, which is the first time I've seen product placement in a video game. Now I'm playing Run Like Hell, and the main character drinks BAWLS Guarana soda as a power-up. Is this the start of a new trend?

Jim Johnson—Franklin, VA

A Definitely so. Advertisers, no longer content to plug their products in television shows, movies, and even songs, have turned their sights toward the booming video game industry to peddle their wares. Product placement has historically dominated in the film industry, but recently video games have become more appealing to companies as they are gaining more popularity and progressively luring consumer attention away from other forms of media...and from advertisers. In fact, last year the industry garnered $6.4 billion in annual revenue, which isn't far behind the $8.4 billion the film industry pulled in. So it is a logical step for companies that want to target huge audiences to infiltrate this increasingly popular medium. And placement of Dole bananas in Super Monkey Ball and BAWLS Guarana in Run Like Hell are just the beginning. Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer features characters using Nokia mobile phones, and players will be able to eat and sell food from McDonald's in EA's upcoming The Sims Online.

Now most people will laud that the market is gaining more mainstream exposure, even respect, by being sought out by major corporations, but there are some other aspects of this that should be considered. And with so much media focus on violent content in video games, it seems like this newest trend is going on unnoticed and without any critical discourse surrounding it. According to Gary Ruskin of Commercial Alert, a nonprofit organization created to keep commercial culture from exploiting children, "Product placements are inherently deceptive because people are not aware beforehand that the advertising is there." That could be a cause for concern to gamers who will be paying $50 for games with commercials in them.

According to Gina Cabrera, promotions manager for Interplay, BAWLS keeps gamers "fueled for hours of gameplay" with its guarana berry-derived caffeine, which is twice as powerful as that found in coffee. In addition to improving your gameplaying endurance, however, caffeine can also cause insomnia, anxiety, hyperactivity, and nervousness. Then there's McDonald's, which will be advertising in The Sims Online, that sells food products that, while maybe tasty, are high in saturated fat, sugar, and sodium. Even if you put the health concerns aside, the question remains: Does McDonald's presence make the Sims' world more interesting or The Sims Online a better game? That's open to debate.

On the other hand, sometimes sponsorships can add realism—in the case of authentic, logo-laden NASCAR paint jobs, for instance, or the banners in a sports stadium. Still, other games play both sides of the fence. The Tony Hawk's Pro Skater series from Activision features real skateboard graphics as well as authentic brands and logos for that true-to-life touch—but you'll also find logos for Nokia and Jeep in the game without any real skateboarding context for them.



Of course, game publishers stand to make mucho dollars with lucrative advertising deals such as these, and as video games get more and more popular, it would be naive to believe that product placement in video games will go away. Just be aware. Always research what you're being sold and who stands to profit from it—and don't blindly buy into it.

Submissions

At *GamePro*, listening is what we do best. When you have a problem with a product or feel you've been ripped off, we want to know. Write to:

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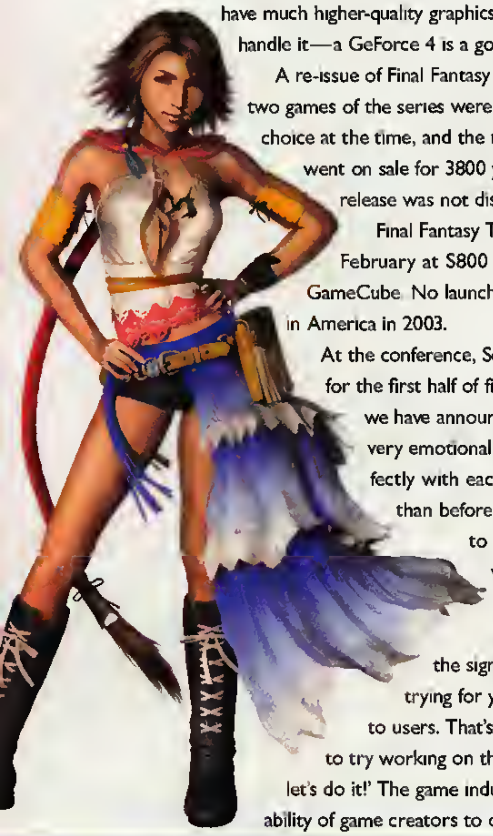
SQUARE REVEALS FFX-2

Company confirms U.S. release of Final Fantasy XI for Windows

In October, Japan's Square Co. Ltd. unveiled its forthcoming games for the Japanese market and offered a first look at its Final Fantasy X-2 title. At an event in Tokyo, the company announced launch dates for several games, including two that could be available before April 2003.

Top of the list is Final Fantasy X-2, a new game set in the same world as Square's Final Fantasy X, a title that has sold more than 5 million copies worldwide since last October. While the main characters will be the same (Yuna will be the star this time), Square stressed that the game will be a brand-new title, not a continuation of the first FFX. Final Fantasy X-2 (pronounced ten-two) will go on sale in Japan in March for the PlayStation 2 console at a price yet to be determined; see this issue's Role-Player's Realm for a preview.

Square also discussed the launch of several other Final Fantasy games. A Windows version of Final Fantasy XI, the latest installment in the series, went on sale in Japan in November at around 8000 yen (U.S. $64). Players in the Windows version can connect to the same online gaming server as the PlayStation 2 version of the game and battle each other across the network. An American release of the Windows version was officially confirmed as in development, and it's expected to have much higher-quality graphics than the Japanese PS2 edition (assuming your PC's graphics card can handle it—a GeForce 4 is a good bet).



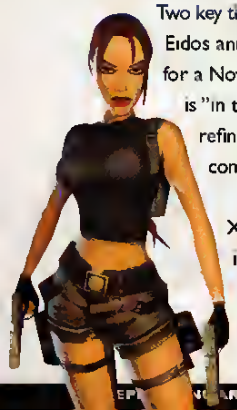
A re-issue of Final Fantasy I and II was planned for October for the PlayStation platform. The first two games of the series were originally released for the Japanese version of the NES, the system of choice at the time, and the re-issue is the first time they will be available for the PlayStation. They went on sale for 3800 yen each or in a more fancy collector's box for 8000 yen; an American release was not discussed.

Final Fantasy Tactics Advance will go on sale for the Game Boy Advance platform in February at 5800 yen. Square also showed Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles for the GameCube. No launch date or price was provided, but both games are expected to appear in America in 2003.

At the conference, Square President Yoichi Wada predicted total sales of 4.37 million units for the first half of fiscal 2003. "This is the first business meeting we've held in a while, and we have announced games for a wide variety of platforms," Wada commented. "It's a very emotional time for me...now that we have the ability to make games that fit perfectly with each system, I hope that we can help the industry expand even further than before. Starting several years ago, Square has taken a 'back to basics' approach to game development. All we thought about during development was what we wanted to present to the user. The first fruits of this are what you see today."

Shinji Hatano, head of software development at Nintendo, pointed out the significance of the new Square/Nintendo relationship: "Nintendo has been trying for years now to improve its software and find ways to bring this software to users. That's why, when we received word from Square developers that they wanted to try working on the GameCube and Game Boy Advance, we immediately said, 'All right, let's do it!' The game industry is in something of a difficult phase right now, but I believe that the ability of game creators to do what they do best will lead to new expansion in the industry."

GAMING'S LEADING LADIES LATE



Two key titles expected to be ready for the holidays have been delayed, according to their respective publishers. Eidos announced that Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness, originally scheduled for a November release, will be pushed to February 2003. In a statement, Eidos said the game is "in the final stages of development and testing" and that it would "benefit from further refinement in order to maximize the gameplay experience and [its] potential in a very competitive marketplace."

Additionally, several retailers have rescheduled the shipping date for Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball to as late as January 15. At press time, Tecmo had not issued an official statement, but the game's absence in playable form at the Tokyo Game Show in September left several gamers wondering if the title would ship on schedule. The Japanese version was slated to ship on December 7, and that date had been revised to January 23 at press time.



PS2 DVR?

Two start-up companies are combining their forces to turn the PS2 into a TiVo-style digital video recorder. It's like this: You'd run SnapStream's Personal Video Station TV on your home PC, network it over to your PS2 via the Network Adaptor, and run BroadQ's QCast Tuner on your PS2. Ta da—whatever cable or satellite signal you feed into your PC will be recorded to the hard drive and can be played back on your TV via the PS2. Sound interesting? Visit www.snapstream.com and see if it's something that would make you want to chuck your VCR out the window.

Kill Bill: The Video Game

The world has yet to see a *Reservoir Dogs* or *Pulp Fiction* video game, but heaven help us, Quentin Tarantino's upcoming movie *Kill Bill* will hit consoles and PCs in the second quarter of 2004. Black Label Games (The Thing, Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter) will develop and publish at least one game based on the Uma Thurman film about an assassin out for revenge; for his part, Tarantino will create exclusive footage for the game's development.



Activision Buys Luxoflux

'Tis the season for acquisitions. Shortly after the big Microsoft/Rare deal went down, Activision announced it had purchased Luxoflux, developer of the Vigilante 8 series of car-combat games as well as the team behind the upcoming True Crime: Streets of L.A. Luxoflux is also working on a Shrek game, which Activision will co-publish with TDK Mediactive.

BMX XXX Censored

Just two weeks before BMX XXX was slated to ship, Acclaim announced that the PlayStation 2 version would have its infamous mature content toned down. The Sony edition has none of the topless nudity featured in the Xbox and 'Cube versions, a concession to Wal-Mart and the other big national chains that originally declined to carry the game. All three ports share the same deranged missions and bathroom humor, though, so PS2 owners shouldn't feel too left out. Watch for full reviews next issue, or check out the current coverage at GamePro.com.

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SNEAK PEEK: NBA STREET 2

EA Sports Big has supplied a few early screens of NBA Street 2, which is currently in development for multiple platforms. These three screens are a small miracle since the only info available is that NBA legends like Larry Bird and Wilt Chamberlain will be in the sequel. The game will be out sometime this spring, but until then, feast your eyes and save your pennies.







JOYRIDE FIGURES: WAVES 3 AND 4

JoyRide Studios is cooking up more and varied video game action figures this winter. Waves 3 and 4 will roll out between the months of December and March under the GamePro Presents and Nintendo Power Presents banners. Wave 3, which should be available now, consists of Luigi from Luigi's Mansion; Psymon from SSX; Slash and Angel from the Crazy Taxi series; Jacky from Virtua Fighter 4; the Mammoth Tank and Flame Tank from Command & Conquer: Renegade; and, in very limited quantities, *GamePro*'s own Dan Elektro (only 2500 will be made, 100 of which will be autographed).

Wave 4 begins shipping in mid-January, and the big star there is Samus from Metroid Prime—the first Metroid figure ever, amazingly enough. She's joined by Link and Epona from The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time; Beat from Jet Set Radio Future; Havoc, the Stealth Tank, and the Orca Fighter from Command & Conquer: Renegade; the FockWulfe and Thunderbolt from Medal of Honor: Allied Assault; and the rare *GamePro* editor chase figure, Major Mike. Look for them where you buy your games, or scour eBay now!









Best-Selling Video Game Titles: September 2002

	TITLE	PLATFORM	PUBLISHER
1	Madden NFL 2003	PS2	EA Sports
2	Kingdom Hearts	PS2	Square EA
3	Super Mario Sunshine	GameCube	Nintendo
4	SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs	PS2	Sony
5	Tekken 4	PS2	Namco
6	Star Fox Adventures	GameCube	Nintendo
7	Yu-Gi-Oh! Dark Duel Stories	GBC	Konami
8	Animal Crossing	GameCube	Nintendo
9	Grand Theft Auto III	PS2	Rockstar
10	Yu-Gi-Oh! Forbidden Memories	PS	Konami

Source: NPDFunworld TRSTS Video Games Tracking Service



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GAMEPRO Labs

Pelican Wireless G3 Controller

Rating: 1.5



The concept was sound and something gamers wanted: Create a wireless GameCube controller that, unlike Nintendo's WaveBird, offered rumble feedback. The G3 is Pelican's try, but it's a case of try, try again. The rumble feedback is very flaky—several controllers didn't rumble at all, and the one that did was depressingly weak. The controller lacked a solid feel, and the A button tended to activate itself at random. Unfortunately, the addition of rumble and a greater range (50 feet) isn't worth the subtraction of performance, and for the same price, the WaveBird's simply better quality.—*Dan Elektro*

Price: $34.99. Contact: Pelican, 323/234-9911, www.pelicanacc.com

Saitek WOW Adapter for PS2

Rating: 4.5

Clearly, the buzzword this year is wireless, and Saitek's WOW (With Out Wires) adapter for the PS2 gives gamers the best of both worlds. No need to get adjusted to a third-party controller—this setup lets you use your existing gamepads, cords and all, and throws a wireless transmitter with a 30-foot range between your controller and your console. The system comes with NiMH rechargeable batteries, which can charge while you play with a spare set of alkalines; indicator lights tell you when you're almost out of juice. There's a pass-through port for convenience and no AC adapter—it draws power from the PS2's controller ports. Works great, looks nice—it's a handy concept, well executed. Wow.—*Bad Hare*

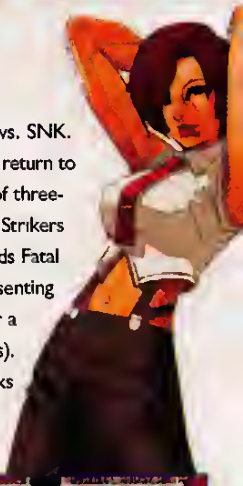
Price: $39.95. Contact: Saitek, 310/212-5412, www.saitekusa.com



HOT AT THE ARCADES

King of Fighters 2002

Developed by Eolith • Published by Playmore
Available now



Before there was Capcom vs. SNK, there was...SNK vs. SNK. The King of Fighters series is back, and in many ways, it's a return to the series' roots. The biggest change is the restoration of three-on-three team battles, which hasn't been seen since the Strikers system came into use with KOF '99. Teams include squads Fatal Fury, Art of Fighting, an all-female force, and trios representing each King of Fighters game from 1996 through 2001, for a total of 39 characters (not counting plenty of hidden folks). An enhanced power-up system should make special attacks a little easier to pull off now, too. The King of Fighters 2002 is available now in finer arcades everywhere.

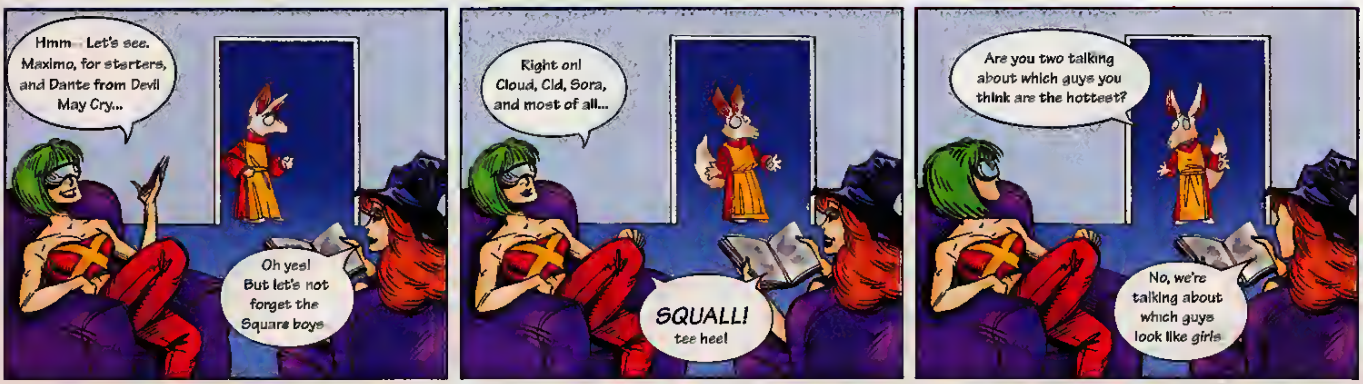




static

Craft: Ghost...StarCraft: Ghost...N64 and PlayStation fans, take note: Tony Hawk has not abandoned you. Activision very quietly released THPS3 on the N64 and THPS4 on the PS last year. Sorry we didn't review them—it was as big a secret to us as it may be to you. • Remember Jim M., the guy who wrote to Buyers Beware with the clever tape trick to stop your PS2 blue-bottom CDs from scratching (page 26, September 2002)? He's working on a special project on gamers themselves—the people who really drive our industry. Write to macchinoe@ameritech.net and tell him why you love gaming, when you realized you were a gamer for life...any strong memory or opinion that you have as part of this hobby. • While you're at your computer, check out the awesome online comic at www.pvponline.com. Daily updates, excellent writing, likeable characters...this is laugh-out-loud game comedy. And, being set at a video game magazine, parts of it are all too true. • Rockstar was nice enough to send over some pastel T-shirts promoting Vice City. We all thought they were kitchy and cool—but only Dr. Zombie was crazy enough to wear one. Right away. What can we say? Sky blue and hot pink are his colors. • Checked out metroidprimed.com yet? Samus fans should. • Want a good laugh at Dan Elektro's expense? Check out GamePro.com for some choice outtakes from his voice-overs for the Action DVD 2003. We love making him look bad, but it's better when he does it to himself. • Metroid Fusion...Metroid Fusion...Metroid Fusion.. Metroid Fusion ..Metroid Fusion.. Metroid Fus

HIDDEN CHARACTERS "Boys Will Be...Boys?"



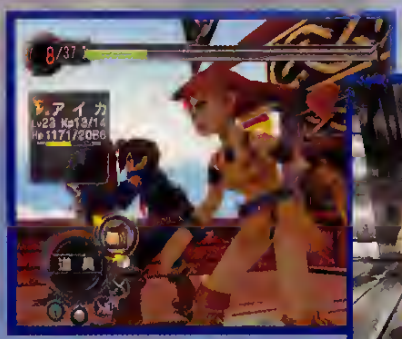
Babble: Auch 'n Amrich Doodles: Mao

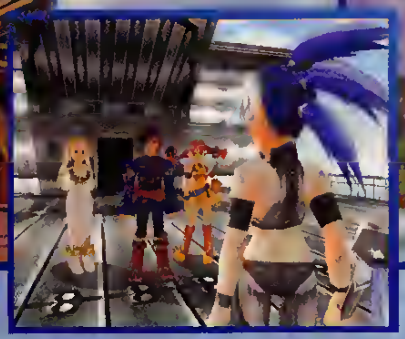

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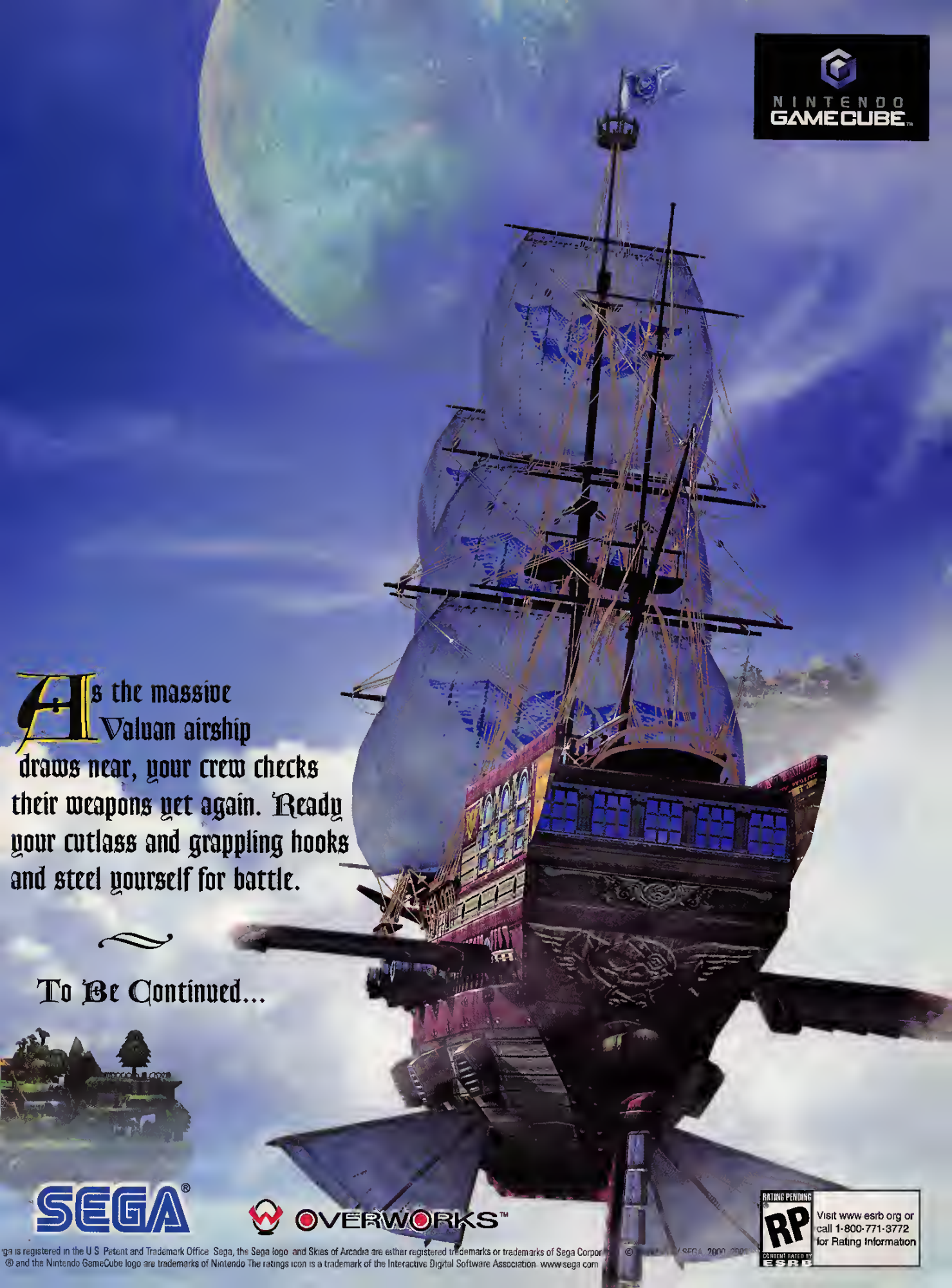
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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Blood and Gore Violence

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METROID PRIME

WHAT IS THERE to say about Metroid that hasn't been said? The wait is over, the hype has been answered, and finally the world can see what Retro Studios has been doing to one of Nintendo's most loved franchises.

AS METROID AS YOU WANNA BE

Nintendo faithful have worried about Metroid Prime for some time. Fearing an Unreal Tournament–esque blast fest, a lot of people have cast doubt upon Samus's GameCube debut, and not without reason. Metroid is known as one of the best 2D side-scrolling adventures ever, and the switch to three dimensions has never really gone well in the past.

Worry not, folks. Samus's adventures on Tallon IV are every bit as wondrous as her original trip to Zebes—maybe even more so. With fantastic visual details, an incredible soundtrack, and all the backtracking, ice-beam-collecting gameplay you'd expect, Metroid Prime is just as Metroid as the previous games in the series.

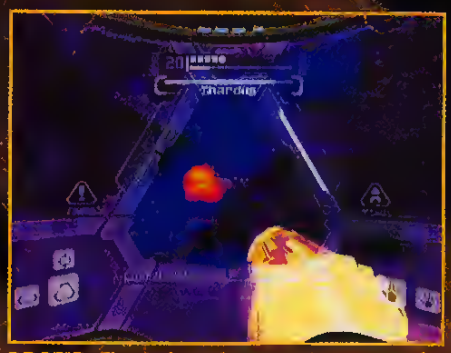


Ahh, the Metroid. All of this conflict and fun can be directly traced back to these cute wee bags of bulbous goo.

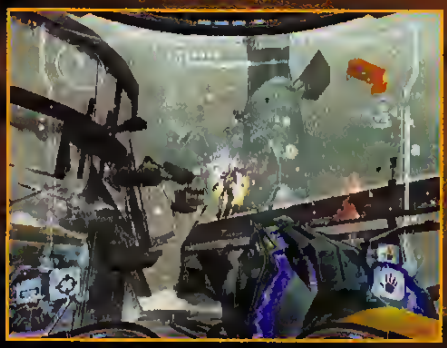
GO ANYWHERE, OVER AND OVER

Metroid games have always been about exploration, secret areas, and collecting power-ups that are cleverly hidden in plain sight. You might see a door in the first room that you can't reach until much later in the game, and behind that door might lie an entire new set of rooms to discover. You'll do a lot of backtracking, but you'll do it with a purpose as you realize that the cliff that was too high to get to in the beginning is a piece of cake with your new Space Jump boots. Within a few structural limits, you have free rein of the place to come, see, and conquer as you will. As you play, the world unfolds before you, and you become the powerful warrior you need to be to end the threat that enfolds the world of Tallon IV.

The old Metroid sense of adventure is back, but all the backtracking can get repetitive. You'll see most of the areas of the game several times over, but it's usually from different perspectives as you return with new abilities to open up new areas. Metroid's ingenious level design guarantees that you'll see old areas in new ways and that you'll always be finding something new if you just look. It makes for fine adventure and engaging exploration, and it's almost uniquely Metroid. Salute to Retro Studios and Nintendo for giving us the industry's Holy Grail—a next-gen game that significantly upgrades the genre while keeping the classic feel of the original.



PROTIP: Thardus's weak spots only appear with the Thermal Visor at first. Eventually, though, your visor will overload, and you can target his weak spots normally.



Metroid is so immersive that you'll quickly lose sight of the fact that so much is happening on your screen. Even with the snow, the enemies, and the visor effects, there's no noticeable slowdown.

FIRST-PERSON SAMUS

Metroid Prime's biggest problem, at least in the beginning, is that it isn't a first-person shooter. The controls work more like a first-person Legend of Zelda—you lock onto enemies to attack



PROTIP: Memorize the locations of each Save Point. When you just got a new Beam upgrade and you've been playing for 16 hours straight, you'll be glad you did.



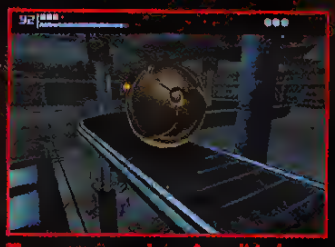
PROTIP: Always scan boss monsters to find their weaknesses when you first meet them. The knowledge you gain is invaluable to beating them.



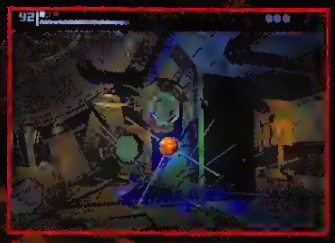
PROTIP: The Wave Beam is great for fighting against fast-smart enemies. If you charge it up, the beam will home in on targets for you.

SUPER METROID BALL

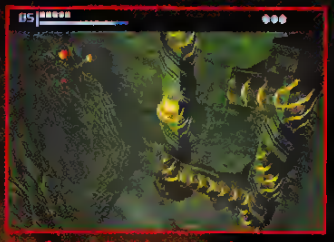
One of Samus's defining abilities is that of morphing into a small ball and rolling about. Metroid Prime forces you to use all your Metroid Ball skills to succeed. Here are just a few things you can do.



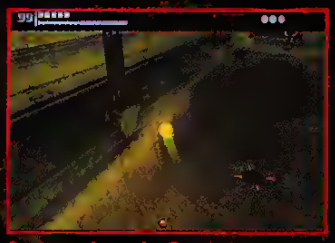
There are a number of small ledges and tunnels that you can only get into as a ball. Most of the time, these are hidden areas that lead to secret power-ups or routes around obstacles.



Once you get bombs, you can use them to get to hidden areas by bombing certain walls or using the explosion to bounce yourself upward to higher ledges. With perfect timing, you can bounce yourself even higher by placing a bomb in mid-air and bomb-bounding back up to the bomb just as it's about to explode.



The Spider Ball lets you glom onto magnetic tracks and climb walls and ceilings. There are tons of secret areas and new places you can only reach with the Spider Ball.

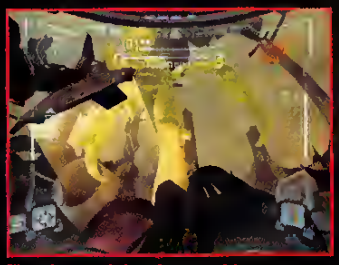


Once you have the Boost power-up, you can use half-pipe formations to vault yourself to previously unreachable areas. There are more of these than you think, so keep your eyes open. The Boost also helps you escape enemies if

CONTINUED ▶

HERE COMES THE BOSS

Metroid Prime's bosses require quick thinking and quicker reflexes to beat. Most of them have a definite puzzle you need to solve to win. Flaaghra, the first big boss in the Chozo Ruins, is a great example.



Flaaghra can't be damaged by weapon fire, but you can knock him out temporarily. Keep him groggy so he won't interrupt you while you do your work.



In order to damage Flaaghra, you have to get him to retreat into the bud from which he grows. Shoot the red dots on the solar dishes to get them to aim away from Flaaghra. When they're all aiming up, he'll retreat.



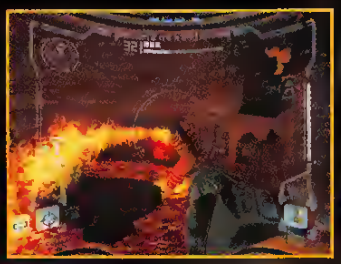
Once Flaaghra retreats, morph and roll into one of the channels at his base. When you reach the end, drop a bomb. This will finally damage him. Do all this four times, and you win.

them, you do a lot of jumping, and you can't strafe without locking on first. Ten hours into the game you'll still be accidentally firing missiles when you want to see the map, and the use of the triggers to look about and lock onto targets never feels completely right.

Once you understand that you're not going to be doing a lot of circle-strafing and rocket-jumping, the game begins to feel like Metroid, and the magic begins. While the controls never really become second nature, you'll be amazed at how well they fit the game's style. Every button, trigger, and nudge of the directional pad and C Stick seem like they were designed with Metroid Prime in mind.

PIRATES WITH LASERS AND EVERYTHING

So don't worry, Metroid faithful; your good faith has been well served. Metroid Prime is a fine new installment to the legendary series, and even the stuffiest old-school snob will find tons to like about Prime for the GameCube.



PROTIP: Some things in Metroid Prime just make sense. If you want to take out fire-based enemies quickly, for example, hit them with an Ice Beam blast. Simple.



PROTIP: The Ice Beam is great for taking out targets quickly. Most frozen enemies can be shattered with a single well-placed missile.



PROTIP: To defeat the Super Predator boss, morph into a ball and drop bombs beneath him. He's only vulnerable from below, so just roll, bomb, and repeat.



PROTIP: The thermal visor will show you enemies that are otherwise invisible. Use it anytime fog, weather, or other factors hinder your vision.

GRAPHICS 4.5

Metroid's dazzling details go to show how much further this title could have gone. A little more polish and shine, and Metroid could have made Halo look like Whacked.

CONTROL 4.0

The controls are nearly impossible until you grasp the game—10 hours into it you'll still be firing missiles when you just want to check the map—but then they feel comfortable, if not natural.

SOUND 5.0

Great sound effects bring to life both Samus's suit and the world she's exploring, and evocative music keeps the blood flowing while perfectly expressing the alien environment.

FUN FACTOR 4.5

Despite the first-person perspective, this is definitely Metroid with all the wonders and frustrations inherent in the series. If you want a long, tough, and secret-ridden behemoth of a game, Metroid is prime.



BY D-PAD DESTROYER

- Developed by Retro Studios
- Published by Nintendo
- $49.99
- Available now
- Action/adventure
- 1 player

ESRB: T (Teen) — Content: Violence

FUN FACTOR: 4.5

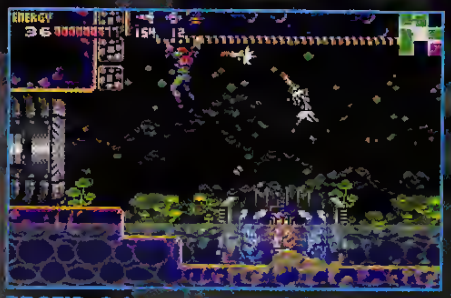
GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.5	5.0	4.0	4.5

METROID FUSION

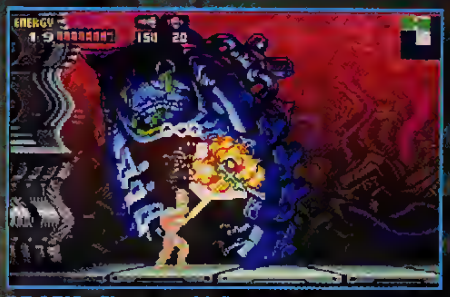
IF THAT WHOLE "Samus all rollin' around in 3D" thing doesn't put peanut butter on your chocolate bar, then either (A) seek help, for there is clearly something wrong with you, or (B) fret not, for there is another, more familiar, and equally excellent way to get your Metroid on.

SPACE-TIME OUT OF JOINT

Metroid Fusion (a.k.a. Metroid 4) is an all-new, mildly hallucinatory spiritual successor to the sacred SNES incarnation of the series. It's a little bit smaller in some ways, a little more inventive in others, and just as indispensable as it ever was. In grand Metroid fashion, secrets (missile tanks, bomb upgrades, entire alien ecosystems) are scattered everywhere—most of the game actually takes place in the "hidden areas" not shown on your main map. The old warm, fuzzy feeling of Metroid Mystery Satisfaction is concealed in every corner.



PROTIP: Before you begin to fight the security robot in Sector 6 (NOC) for the second time, use a Power Bomb to reveal the "sticky" ceiling.



PROTIP: There are 20 Energy Tanks, 43 Missile Tanks, and 32 Power Bombs Tanks. You'll need as many as possible to beat the last few bosses.

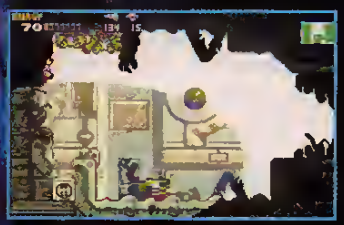
XENOCIDE

Samus received a few upgrades in her downsizing. In a game-design stroke of genius, you're forced to chase after your power-ups once you blow them out of an enemy's shell; if you're not fast enough, they recombine themselves into bigger, tougher, more evil enemies. The story's great, too—a twisting, frightening *2001* meets *The Thing* meets *Alien Resurrection* sort of deal involving our intrepid heroina, a life-sucking life form, and a terrifying, nigh-indestructible Samus "clone." The graphics display an artistry and detail that may actually outclass the SNES version's.

A few minor disappointments: While most old upgrades are intact, you'll miss the Ice Beam (replaced by the less-fun-but-more-reasonable Ice Missiles) and Grappling Beam. You'll also miss Super Metroid's sense of utter inescapable hugeness—the rooms are a lot smaller since they're designed to fit the constraints of the GBA screen—and even though Fusion grew from the upper branches of Challenge Tree, the whole game shouldn't take more than five hours to beat the first time through.



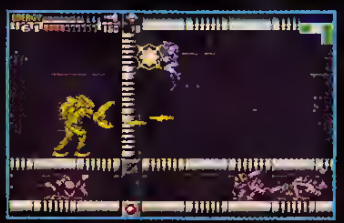
Beat Fusion, connect the game to your GameCube and Metroid Prime, and unlock the original NES Metroid! Or don't...it's actually a lot crappier than you remember.



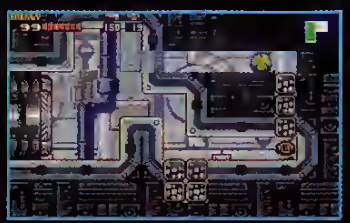
PROTIP: This is Metroid. Try using your bombs on everything. *Everything.*

A CANTICLE FOR SAMUS

Even if 2D adventures like this (and similar-styled Castlevania games such as Harmony of Dissonance and Circle of the Moon) no longer have a place on our televisions, they still have a place in our palms. Rediscover your love for the girl in the robot space suit—she works wonders in any dimension.



PROTIP: While groups of floating X will merge into more powerful enemies if left uncaptured, sometimes you have to let that happen in order to proceed.



PROTIP: Use the high road to get this Energy Tank just before you fight The Nightmare. The "obvious" low road leads to a trap floor.



PROTIP: Gain entry to the Level 4 Security Room in the bottom-left corner of Sector 4 (AQA) by using your missiles to get above this tube.

GRAPHICS 5.0

Varied, vivid, weird, excellently animated, and better than the SNES game's. The world is a little more colorful than you're used to in Metroid, though that's a fine compromise to the dark nature of the GBA screen.

SOUND 4.0

The sound effects are superior (and should be very familiar to Metroid vets). Though while the music is "good" it isn't quite up to previous stupid-high standards, and classic Metroid melodies come few and far between.

CONTROL 4.5

Insanely tight and exactly like the SNES version's. Stunts like wall jumps require some tricky timing but not in an ineptly programmed way. Samus could use a permanent missile toggle option, though—and locking your diagonal aim with the L button gets a little tough.

FUN FACTOR 4.5

Metroid Fusion is a little too short, but the secrets are bountiful, and the addition of power-ups that potentially fight back is sublimely ingenious. The old Metroid magic is definitely back, no matter what dimension you dwell in.



BY STAR DINGO

- Developed and published by Nintendo
- $29.99
- Available now
- Action/adventure
- 1 player

ESRB: E (Everyone)

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
5.0	4.0	4.5	4.5

grand theft auto Vice City



PROTIP: The police are more concerned with violent crime than traffic violations. However, insane driving will get you attention if you collide with a cop car.



PROTIP: The chainsaw is easily the coolest and most devastating melee weapon you can wield. You'll get it in the Treacherous Swine mission; hold on to it forever.



BREAK OUT THE skinny ties, grab some hair gel, and throw away your socks—you're headed to Vice City circa 1986, where the sun shines as bright as Cyndi Lauper's hair and the criminal underworld is as ruthless as Donald Trump. If you liked Grand Theft Auto III at all, chances are you'll want to stay in this tropical hellhole for a long, long time.

Miami Heat

In events that take place 15 years before GTA III, players assume the role of Tommy Vercetti, fresh out of prison and left holding the bag from a drug deal gone awry in Florida's Vice City. Now you gotta get the money, the drugs, and the thugs responsible. Top actors including Ray Liotta (*Goodfellas*), Dennis Hopper (*Blue Velvet*), and none other than Philip Michael Thomas (*Miami Vice*'s Tubbs) play the colorful stereoty… um, characters that inhabit the steamy, seedy city.

Play a few of the game's 80-plus missions, and you'll see why this isn't called GTA IV. Several elements, like Tommy's jump animation, body language, and the occasionally awkward camera movements, have been wholly recycled from Vice's predecessor. However, considering the amount of time it took to create that predecessor and how good it was, an expansion-pack approach here is understandable. Cool visual elements like contrails in the sky, complex world environments, and highly detailed textures are offset by some distressingly authentic old-school draw-in—palm trees pop into existence just a



PROTIP: To eliminate the target in Four Iron, ram your golf cart into his while he's near the edge of the water. Drowning him is easiest, but you can also make his cart explode.



PROTIP: Try switching cars halfway through Waste tha Wife—use a heavy car to do most of the damage, then finish her off with a speedy one so you can get away.

FIND OUT MORE ONLINE



PROTIP: Perform a drive-by shooting by pressing and holding L2 or R2, and then pressing ○. You can do this only with small machine guns.



PROTIP: In Riot, shoot the red barrel to blow up two of the vans, then steal the third, drive away, and wreck it on the road.



PROTIP: If you roll a vehicle, get out and get away as fast as possible—it's gonna blow in just a few seconds.



PROTIP: In shootouts with the police, aim for the grill of the squad car—you'll blow up the car and any nearby officers.



PROTIP: Tap △ to leap out of a moving car; this is especially handy if the vehicle is on fire since you can use it as a rolling bomb.



PROTIP: For Phenom Penh '86, ditch the heavy machine gun once the helicopter lands and go with lighter arms.

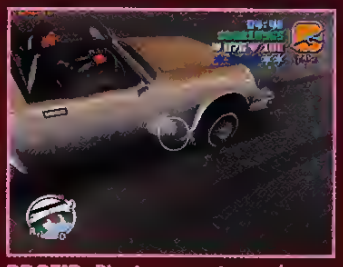
few hundred feet away—and the cut-scene characters still gesticulate wildly with flailing arms but eerily immobile hands. In other words, the paint may look prettier in pink, but the canvas is still pretty much the same.

Greased Palm Trees

Of course, a re-purposed graphics engine doesn't make the gameplay any less compelling, enjoyable, or wholly wrong. Vice City offers all of the sordid, shady mercenary work of GTA III with expanded player abilities and the bonus of mocking an entire decade's pop culture. In addition to stealing cars inspired by Lamborghinis, Corvettes, and Ferraris, you'll pilot various types of motorcycles as well as helicopters—both real and remote-controlled. "Fun" weapons include hammers, machetes, rocket launchers, and the indispensable chainsaw. Missions will take you inside buildings, over rooftops, and through the waterways of Vice City as you tackle everything from planting bombs to smashing cars to sniping targets from inside moving vehicles. For completists, it's about 100 hours of gameplay. Vice City is twice the size of Liberty City, and it's more fun than ever to seek out stunt bonuses and hidden packages.



PROTIP: Two tips for carjacking: One—make sure no cops are around (including those on foot). Two—get away! Soma drivers seek revenge.



PROTIP: Blowing out a tire won't stop a car, but it will slow it down and make it harder to drive.

Sounds of the City

The controls remain unchanged except for a new aiming system where you press and hold R1 to lock on to a single target in the middle of a crowded firefight. Driving around the city is still a thrill, though; all the cars handle differently but smoothly, and they are all yours for the taking (so long as no cops spot you jacking the new ride).

As in GTA III, the hilarious and expansive soundtrack steals the show. As you bump off unwanted wives and incite riots, you'll hear Kate Bush, Mr. Mister, Night Ranger, Quiet Riot, and even the King of Pop, Michael Jackson, back when he still had the crown. Plus, you'll get to hear DJs Lazlow and Toni earlier in their careers. The voice-acting from the Hollywood talent pays off big with great caricatures and plenty of amusing asides; Liotta's smarmy charm as Tommy is worth the price all by itself.

Crime Does Pay

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City earns every last bit of its Mature rating as it boasts everything from brutal murders to fiery four-letter words. But, as in GTA III, it's all supported by excellent gameplay and a crime-riddled context that makes it all work for its intended adult audience. With Vice City, mature gamers get more of the addictive, amoral gameplay that they know, love, and expect from Grand Theft Auto. Fans won't be disappointed in the least.



PROTIP: To complete Road Kill, use a fast car to catch up with the delivery boy, then knock him off his bike. Once he's on foot, waste him however you can.



PROTIP: When the cops are on your tail, find and start a new mission. It's quicker and easier than locating enough bribe icons.



Vice City introduces motorcycles to the gameplay—from small scooters and noisy dirt devils to chrome choppers and speedy sport bikes.

GRAPHICS 4.5

It's a pastel paint job over GTA III—you'll spot several reused animations—and the only bummer is the gnarly pop-up that occurs alarmingly close on the horizon. However, the enormous world is so rich in close-up detail that you likely won't care.

SOUND 5.0

With bitchin' voice-acting, 8000 pedestrian comments, hilarious radio commercials, all-new talk show discussions, and seven CDs worth of licensed 1980s music, GTA continues to set the standard for how a soundtrack can define a video game.

CONTROL 4.5

Driving is totally tubular; all the cars (and motorcycles!) handle differently, but with practice they're smoother than Don Johnson himself. An improved aiming system makes gunplay a bit easier, too.

FUN FACTOR 5.0

So it's GTA 3.5—or GTA III.V—whatever. Just because Vice City recycles some existing elements doesn't mean it's not...fresh. If you've squeezed Grand Theft Auto III for all it's worth and you're eager for more, a trip to Vice City is, like, totally awesome.



BY DAN ELEKTRO

- Developed by Rockstar North
- Published by Rockstar Games
- $49.99
- Available now
- Action/adventure
- 1 player

MATURE M

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.5	5.0	4.5	5.0

Tom Clancy's SPLINTER CELL

ALL THE WAY up to the very end, Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell weaves well-balanced gameplay with fantastic visuals, creating an unforgettable adventure in the stealth/action genre.



PROTIP: Shooting around a corner is only good for short-range attacks. Your pistol isn't accurate enough to shoot long distances.



PROTIP: Well mines are good for taking out a group of gun-toting mercs. Plant one and then lure the group toward you.

Silent Knight



PROTIP: Turn off the lights in every room you enter. If an unsuspecting guard comes in, he'll first want to turn the lights back on, which will be your cue to take him out from behind.

It's not everyday that you're allowed to experience the ins and outs of the National Security Agency (NSA)—until now. In Splinter Cell, you play as Sam Fisher, an agent who understands the meaning of clandestine special warfare. Working for a special black-operations NSA department, you undertake missions that involve infiltrating highly secure buildings to retrieve valuable information, contacting informants, and even kidnapping suspected criminals all in the name of, well, national security.

The motives may be questionable, but your actions in the field reflect the intensity of the entire game. Splinter Cell is based mostly on stealth tactics—gunning down everybody in your sights is not an option. You'll use the shadows for cover, while scaling walls, crawling through vents, and sliding down zip lines are all in a day's work. You even have to pick locks using the analog stick and open doors silently to achieve maximum silence. Plus, you can't forget to move dead bodies into the shadows so patrols won't get suspicious of your whereabouts. Performing these and other fun acrobatic moves is a simple task, too.

FIND OUT MORE ONLINE



PROTIP: To conserve ammo, use three-burst shots in close quarters and single shots for sniper attacks.

A Hard Knock Life

Not all of the gameplay involves sneaking around, though. If your life is threatened, you'll be able to use the latest (and realistic) military hardware to save your life—the armory includes a modular rifle, frag grenades, wall mines, and more. And if you run out of ammo, you can knock an enemy out cold in his tracks using a well-placed elbow to the face or the back of the head.

If personal confrontation isn't your style, you can always use some high-tech gadgetry to help you avoid unneeded attention. Use a fiber-optic camera to peek underneath doors; fire a sticky camera from your modular rifle to a wall to look around corners; and use a laser microphone to eavesdrop on the enemy.

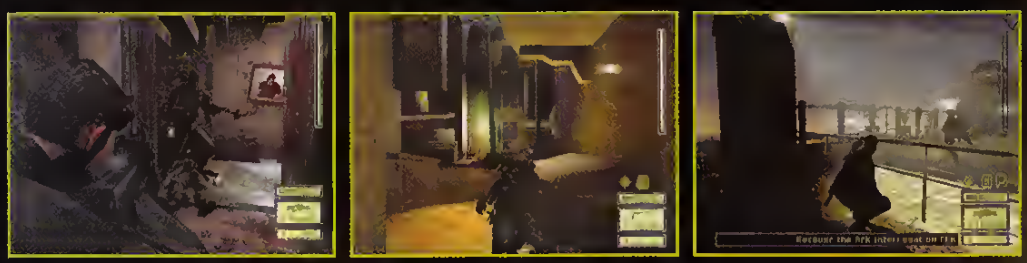


PROTIP: If you don't want to challenge the three-man team that comes storming inside Nikoladze's office, just hang outside from the windowsill until they leave.

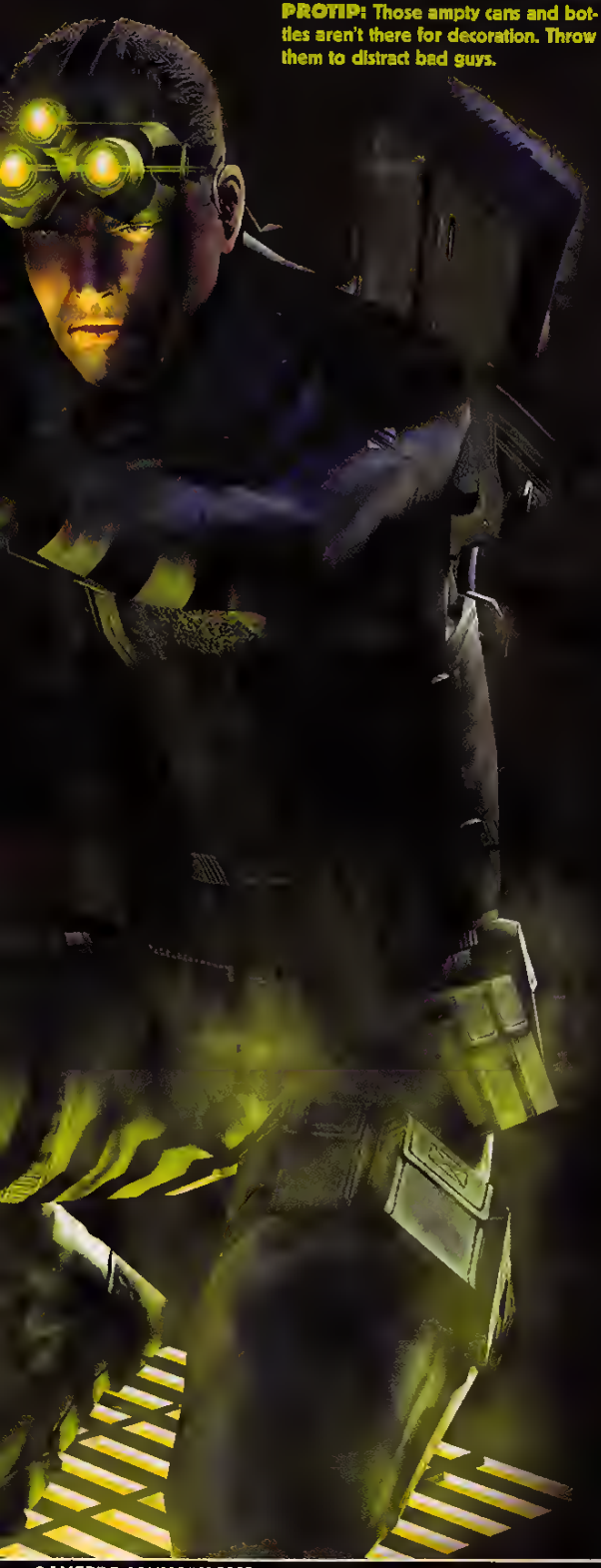
The Fog of War Doesn't Exist

Your equipment looks just like real-life accessories used by Special Forces around the world. In fact, Splinter Cell's visuals are simply fantastic. The game's lighting, which creates amazing shadow effects, is the highlight in the graphics department. In each level, you feel like you're in an authentic real-world location—whether inside CIA headquarters or on top of an oil refinery—complete with highly detailed scenery, interactive objects, and innocent personnel minding their own business.

The sounds are just as convincing, too. Everyday noises of rustling leaves or a creaky floorboard add to the overall theatrical magic, while the music cranks in at just the right moment to make your adrenaline pump even harder. The only downer, though, is the unappealing weapon effects that, sadly, all sound alike.



Sweet-looking graphics are the backbone of this stylized stealth thriller and fit perfectly into the Tom Clancy universe.





PROTIP: Those empty cans and bottles aren't there for decoration. Throw them to distract bad guys.

Time To Cell Your Soul

Despite all of the strong attributes, there are a few minor gripes about Splinter Cell. The most bothersome is that you can't pick up an enemy's gun to use for yourself. So if you're out of ammo during a firefight, you'll have to use only your fists to take out aggressors coming after you. Also, although there are multiple ways to take out enemies, the levels are linear with only one path to take on every mission.

But these issues hardly scratch the finish on this otherwise unfaltering game. Splinter Cell is truly the next generation in stealth combat and a game that every Xbox owner should play.



PROTIP: Although innocent, unarmed workers will run and squeal like a rat to the nearest guard if they see you. Knock them out, but don't kill them for complete cover.

The National Security Agency



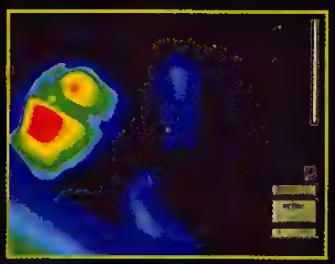
"Providing and protecting vital information through cryptology"—The NSA motto

According to the National Security Agency:

- Its yearly electrical bill is more than $21 million.
- It is one of the top employers of mathematicians in the world.
- Although not a military organization, about half of its employees are from the armed forces.
- The NSA has its own museum named the National Cryptologic Museum, located in Maryland.



PROTIP: If it's too bright for you, don't forget to shoot out the lights for better cover.



PROTIP: Heat vision will enable you to see warm bodies through thin walls.

GRAPHICS 5.0

The game's visual excellence should now be the standard used to measure all other Xbox games. The graphics are sharp, realistic, and incredibly dynamic.

CONTROL 4.5

Although you can't sidestep, an entire laundry list of slick moves is at your disposal and performing them isn't challenging at all.

SOUND 4.5

Footsteps in the rain, creaking floorboards, believable voice-overs—the game's sounds are in tune with the Tom Clancy universe. But a half-point is taken off for weak weapon effects.

FUN FACTOR 5.0

Realistic scenarios in realistic environments add to Splinter Cell's tantalizing world of covert operations. With a strong overall package of incredible features, the stealth/action genre has a new hero.



BY FOUR EYED DRAGON

- Developed by Ubi Soft Montreal
- Published by Ubi Soft
- $49.99
- Available now
- Stealth/action
- 1 player

TEEN	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
	5.0	4.5	4.5	5.0



TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Violence

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GamePro's 12th Annual Readers' Choice Awards



You rented 'em, you borrowed 'em, you bought 'em, you played 'em—however you got your hands on the games of 2002, it's time to put them in order. Name your favorites of the year in GamePro's most prestigious poll, and you could walk away with some great prizes.

Best Action Game

- BloodRayne PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Dead to Rights PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Hunter: The Reckoning GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Jet Set Radio Future XBOX
- The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Maximo: Ghosts to Glory PS2
- Shinobi PS2
- Spider-Man PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Spy Hunter PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Star Wars Jedi Starfighter PS2
- Steel Battalion XBOX

Best Combat Game

- The House of the Dead III XBOX
- James Bond 007: NightFire PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Max Payne PS2/XBOX
- Medal of Honor Frontline PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Metroid Prime GAMECUBE
- Red Faction 2 PS2
- SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs PS2
- TimeSplitters 2 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Turok: Evolution PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
- Unreal Championship XBOX

Best Adventure Game

- Deus Ex: The Conspiracy PS2
- Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem GAMECUBE
- Fatal Frame PS2
- Hitman 2: Silent Assassin PS2/XBOX
- The Mark of Kri PS2
- Onimusha 2: Samurai's Destiny PS2
- Resident Evil GAMECUBE
- Resident Evil 0 GAMECUBE
- Star Wars Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast GAMECUBE/XBOX
- The Thing PS2/XBOX
- Way of the Samurai PS2

Best Platform Game

- Blinx: The Time Sweeper XBOX
- Ratchet & Clank PS2
- Sly Cooper and the Thievius Raccoonus PS2
- Sonic Adventure 2 Battle GAMECUBE
- Super Mario Sunshine GAMECUBE
- ToeJam & Earl III: Mission to Earth XBOX

Best Role-Playing Game

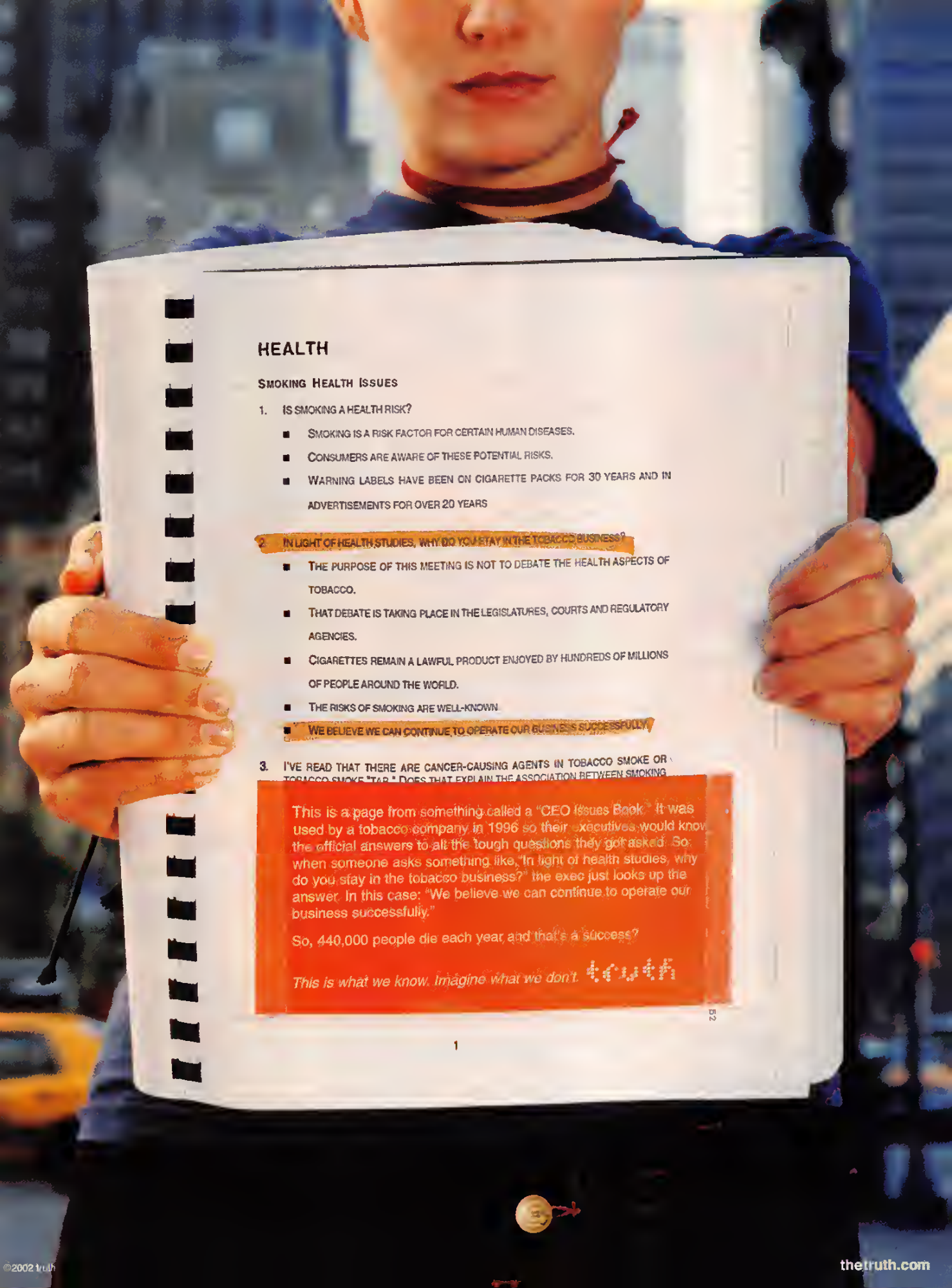
- Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance GAMECUBE/XBOX
- The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind XBOX
- .hack PS2
- Kingdom Hearts PS2
- Lost Kingdoms GAMECUBE
- Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II GAMECUBE
- Suikoden III PS2
- Summoner 2 PS2
- Wild Arms 3 PS2

TRUTH BEHIND THE CURTAIN:

"ISSUES BOOK"

TRUTH BEHIND THE CURTAIN:

"ISSUES BOOK"



This is a page from something called a "CEO Issues Book." It was used by a tobacco company in 1996 so their executives would know the official answers to all the tough questions they got asked. So when someone asks something like, "In light of health studies, why do you stay in the tobacco business?" the exec just looks up the answer. In this case: "We believe we can continue to operate our business successfully."

So, 440,000 people die each year, and that's a success?

This is what we know. Imagine what we don't. truth

©2002 truth

Best Racing Game

Burnout GAMECUBE/XBOX
Burnout 2: Point of Impact PS2
Crazy Taxi 3: High Roller XBOX
NASCAR: Dirt to Daytona PS2/GAMECUBE
NASCAR Thunder 2003 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Shox PS2
Test Drive PS2/XBOX
Wipeout Fusion PS2
World of Outlaws Sprint Cars 2002 PS2

Best Fighting Game

Bloody Roar: Primal Fury GAMECUBE
Capcom vs. SNK 2 PS2
Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee GAMECUBE
Legends of Wrestling II PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Marvel vs. Capcom 2 PS2
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Tekken 4 PS2
Virtua Fighter 4 PS2
WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth PS2

Best Brain/Reflex Game

Animal Crossing GAMECUBE
DDRMAX Dance Dance Revolution PS2
Mad Maestro PS2
Mario Party 4 GAMECUBE
PaRappa the Rapper 2 PS2
Super Monkey Ball 2 GAMECUBE

Best Sports Game: Football

Madden NFL 2003 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
NCAA College Football 2K3 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
NCAA Football 2003 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
NFL 2K3 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
NFL Fever 2003 XBOX

Best Sports Game: Basketball

NBA 2K3 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
NBA Inside Drive 2003 XBOX
NBA Live 2003 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX/PS
NBA Street GAMECUBE
NCAA College Basketball 2K3 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Street Hoops PS2/XBOX

Best Sports Game: Other

All-Star Baseball 2003 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
FIFA Soccer 2003 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
High Heat Major League Baseball 2003 PS2
Hot Shots Golf 3 PS2
NHL 2003 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
NHL 2K3 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
NHL Hitz 20-03 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Soccer Slam PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
World Series Baseball XBOX

Best Action Sports Game

Aggressive Inline PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
BMX XXX PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Freekstyle PS2/GAMECUBE
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 N64
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4 PS2/GAMECUBE/XBOX/PS
TransWorld Snowboarding XBOX

Best PC Game

Battlefield 1942
Command & Conquer Renegade
Delta Force: Black Hawk Down
Dungeon Siege
Earth & Beyond
The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind
Freedom Force
Medal of Honor Allied Assault
No One Lives Forever 2: An Agent in H.A.R.M.'s Way
RollerCoaster Tycoon 2
The Sims Online
The Sims Unleashed
Star Wars Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon
Unreal Tournament 2003
WarCraft III

Best Handheld Game

Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance GBA
Contra Advance GBA
Dragon Ball Z: Collectible Card Game GBA
Dragon Ball Z: The Legacy of Goku GBA
Golden Sun GBA
Kirby: Nightmare in Dreamland GBA
The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past GBA
The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers GBA
Lunar Legends GBA
Metroid Fusion GBA
Phantasy Star Collection GBA
Pinball of the Dead GBA
Street Fighter Alpha 3 GBA
Super Mario World: Super Mario Advance 2 GBA
Tactics Ogre GBA
Yoshi's Island GBA
Yu-Gi-Oh! Dark Duel Stories GBC
Yu-Gi-Oh! The Eternal Duelist Soul GBA

Console of the Year

Game Boy Advance
GameCube
PlayStation
PlayStation 2
Xbox

Game of the Year

Across all platforms, throughout the whole of 2002, which game was the absolute best?

The Polling Booth

To cast your vote, please log on to **www.gamepro.com/rca** and enter to win these fabulous prizes:

3 Grand Prize Winners will receive one of the following: PlayStation 2, GameCube, Xbox

10 First Prize Winners will receive a one-year subscription to *GamePro*

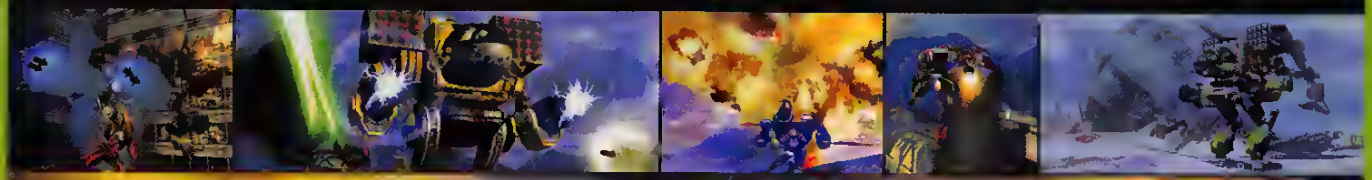
10 Second Prize Winners will receive a GamePro Presents Action Figure

You can also send in your votes via snail mail, but this option should be used only when necessary by those folks who don't have Internet access. If that's you, please mail your votes listed by category (as well as your name, address, phone number, and age) to: *GamePro*'s 12th Annual Readers' Choice Awards P.O. Box 23040 • Oakland, CA 94623-0040. Mailed entries must be received by January 31, 2003.

Only one ballot per person will be accepted. We must have your completed ballot and your full name, address, and telephone number so we may reach you for notification of your prize. Please vote for only one game in each category, or your ballot will be disqualified!

Results will appear in the April 2003 issue. All winners will be selected at random from completed ballots received by the deadline through the mail or online

No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. Contest ends **January 31, 2003.** See page 171 for *GamePro*'s 12th Annual Readers' Choice Awards Official Rules and Conditions.



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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence
Blood

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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

PlayStation 2



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Unreal Tournament 2003

Recommended System Specs

- Windows 98/ME/2000/XP
- 1 GHz CPU
- 256 MB RAM
- 3 GB on HD



PROTIP: For close-quarter brawls, the Rocket Launcher and Flak Cannon reign supreme.



PROTIP: Minigun 101: For closer enemies, use the speedy primary fire to unleash a lethal hail of bullets. For distant opponents, use the precise alt-fire attack to chip away with more powerful explosive rounds.



PROTIP: For best performance on sub-1 GHz PCs, lower physics and sound quality, use "Normal" world detail, and disable the music. For older 3D cards, lower texture and resolution; OpenGL (unsupported; see documentation) may also help. Experiment!



PROTIP: After you've mastered the Shock Rifle Combo (alt-fire, then primary fire), try the new Flak Combo. Blast an alt-fired Flak Shell in mid-flight. Practice, practice.



PROTIP: If your teammates are carrying Link Guns, combine your alt-fire lasers to form a single devastating beam. Watch your back, though, or you're a goner.

SINCE THE CURRENT crop of realistic team shooters has hogged the limelight long enough, Unreal Tournament 2003 sets out to prove that there's still life left in the old deathmatch arena. PC shooter fans, listen up.

DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND

As usual, there's no plot—just kill, kill, kill under the guise of a future TV game show. UT 2003's arsenal not only upgrades old favorites like the Flak Cannon and Minigun, but also adds an Assault Rifle (with grenade launcher), Lightning Gun, and Shield Gun. Gameplay-wise, the new double jumps, wall dodges, and adrenaline moves add pizzazz to the intense shoot-n-scoot gameplay. Team dynamics now take center stage as you recruit and trade A.I. teammates, and aside from the usual Deathmatch and Capture the Flag games, UT 2003 adds Double Domination and Bombing Run modes (but drops Assault!). Though these new team games are worthwhile, they're plagued by frequent stalemates.

Broadband users will have no problem with the smooth online play, and fortunately for modem users, the CPU-controlled 'bots put up enough of a fight to make the single-player Ladder mode worthwhile.

SYSTEM SHOCK

UT 2003 immerses players in outlandish environments like ancient alien forests, techno-Egyptian tombs, and apocalyptic cityscapes. Every arena comes loaded with jaw-dropping visual flourishes like reflective puddles, shimmering monitors, and glossy metal surfaces. But it gets better—thanks to the gruesome "rag-doll" animation system, combatants convulse when struck with lightning, lose limbs when pelted with shrapnel, and flop limply down staircases when riddled with bullets. Who knew physics could be so entertaining?

Potent 3D explosions, bloodcurdling screams, and rousing tunes lend muscle to UT 2003's sonic assault. On the negative side, the team modes feature a chatterbox announcer who breathlessly bellows game status and scores. For sanity's sake, mute this nerd prior to playing.

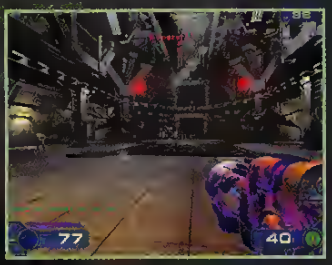
All this sensory delight comes at a steep price. Even a brawny 1 GHz processor and 64 MB 3D card are too skimpy for this game's higher graphical settings. At least players can buy some breathing room by experimenting with detail settings in the Options menu.

FLAK TO THE FUTURE

While UT 2003 may not score points for originality, its visceral intensity is off the charts—other shooters seem frail and timid in comparison. In other words, if you can supply the PC horsepower, let Unreal Tournament 2003 bring the firepower.



PROTIP: The devastating Ion Cannon resides on Phobos 2's roof, visible here in the upper-left corner of the screen. Lock onto a target (alt-fire zooms) until the laser fully charges.



PROTIP: You gather adrenaline by earning kills, head shots, and sprees, as well as by grabbing pills. When your adrenaline hits 100, secret skills are available—Down, Up, Down, Down gives a life Booster.

GRAPHICS 5.0

Without question, UT 2003 sports the most extravagant sci-fi/fantasy environments ever seen. Underneath the seductive visuals, however, lurks an unquenchable hardware hog. Upgrade now, and your eyes will thank you later.

SOUND 4.5

A kick-ass main anthem, window-rattling explosions, and (im)mature voice taunts round out UT 2003's robust sonic offering. That goofy announcer, however, drags the score down a notch.

CONTROL 5.0

Godlike. With a streamlined interface and responsive controls, UT 2003 hits the gameplay bull's eye. The tweaked weapon balance means that cheap trigger-happy tactics are (mostly) MIA.

FUN FACTOR 4.5

Though Unreal Tournament 2003 would shine even brighter with more weapons and meatier team modes, it's a brutally efficient deathmatch title. Replayability props go to the World Editor and mutators.



BY VICIOUS SID

- Developed by Digital Extremes/Epic Games
- Published by Atari
- $44.99
- Available now
- Action
- 32+ players

MATURE M	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
	5.0	4.5	5.0	4.5

No one will mind if you play naked.



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Sim City 4

Paid for by the Friends of Maxis Fund

Hello, PC gaming community—I'm Sim City 4, the latest sequel in one of the longest running urban planning simulation series of all time. Now, you may have noticed a whole lot of other urban planning simulation series popping up on the store shelves, but when it comes time to put your hard-earned money on the line, I think my track record will speak for itself.

This year, I'm planning more than just a mere graphical upgrade disguised as a sequel, unlike some other "civilization"-style simulators—I'm planning an entire overhaul, starting with a brand-new Region system that will enable you to create entire areas with more than one city—dozens, even—at a time, complete with commercial interaction. I'm also offering simplified "drag-and-size" residential, commercial, and industrial zoning and road management, so micro-managing every inch of every city block will be a thing of the past; less frustrating (and more fun) water and resource management; and a wonderfully detailed five-level zoom system that lets you view things from the perspective of a god or the perspective of one of his many dogs.

FIND OUT MORE ONLINE



Sim City 4...working hard to bring the rampaging robot and Sphinx communities together again.





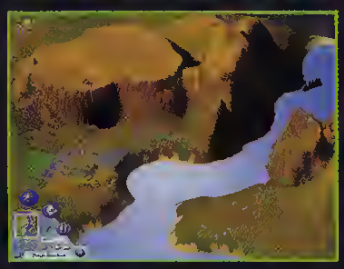














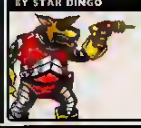
Municipality Magnate 2: Bad for Your Kids, Bad for Your Future

Now, you may have heard some of those *other* civilization, park, and mall management games make claims that they've got "more efficient trade routes" or "more types of petting zoos" than ever before...but will they have a god mode with a great 3D landscape-modeling tool that lets you create plateaus, valleys, lakes, and mountains—even flocks of wild giraffe?

I'll also work with The Sims—one of the single most *popular* games ever made. Purchase me, and you'll be able to import your Sims and then watch them live out their virtual little lives in and around your town, and listen as they dispense anecdotes and personal advice about how to improve their schools and community, and reduce crime and pollution. Now, when it comes time to buy your next city simulation game, I think the choice will be clear: I'm Sim City 4.



BY STAR DINGO



- Developed by Maxis
- Published by EA Games
- Target release date: January

PC WINDOWS

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The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

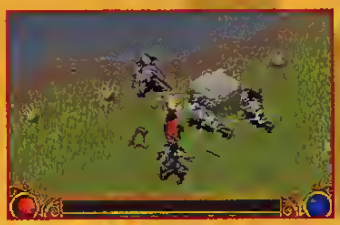
HISTORY BECAME LEGEND, legend became myth, and that which was once a popular PC game has become a movie-licensed GBA title from Electronic Arts.

Forged in the Fires of Mount Blizzard

The Two Towers for the GBA is, for all intents and purposes, Diablo Lite with a J.R.R. Tolkien skin set. Whack away at orc hordes from a top-down almost-isometric perspective with swords, arrows, and magic, then move on to the next map and the next set of orcish hordes. It's the kind of game that would get horribly repetitive except for the fact that you gain experience (as in Diablo); find new armor, weapons, and miscellaneous gear (as in Diablo); and have a skill tree that opens up new attacks and techniques (...as in Diablo!).



In Diablo fashion, each character has his or her own unique branching skill tree—this is Gandalf's.



PROTIP: Everyone except Frodo has tracking skills—just stand still for three seconds to get a green "radar" arrow that points to the area exit.

Where the Shadows Lie

The Two Towers has two significant problems: first is the lack of a map—it's very easy to lose track of where you've been and where you're going. Second, your inventory has only eight slots, and you can't hang on to health and magic restoration items—they must be consumed immediately.

The graphics are a little schizo—the characters look good, but the cyclic backgrounds seem pulled together from the Generic Fantasy Construction Set. The music is outstanding (for the GBA, anyway), featuring several very recognizable pieces from Howard Shore's indelible score, and battles boast some good battle clangs and grunts.

The Two Towers is a huge, fun monster-whacker that would hold up pretty well even without its Tolkien license—it is mini-Diablo, after all. The fact that it's Frodo doin' the monster-whackin' just makes it all the better.



PROTIP: Stand right up against the cave troll's body and hammer away on it—that way, he won't use his devastating "slam the ground and make stalactites fall" attack.



PROTIP: Choose Gandalf, Eowyn, Frodo, Aragorn, or Legolas. Aragorn is a great "beginner" character, and Eowyn's quest is different from the others'.



- Developed by Griptonite Games
- Published by EA Games
- $34.99
- Action/RPG
- Available now
- 2 players

BY STAR DINGO

FUN FACTOR

TEEN	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
T	4.0	4.5	3.5	4.0

Kirby: Nightmare in Dream Land

HE'S PINK, HE'S ROUND, and he's got an appetite for destruction. Kirby is back and looking great on the Game Boy Advance in Nintendo's Kirby: Nightmare in Dream Land.

Pleased to Eat You!

Kirby, a warpstar knight in training, is trying to reassemble the Star Rod, which King Dedede stole. Without the Rod, the Fountain of Dreams is dry and no one in Dream Land can dream—obviously, mayhem ensues. Kirby battles his way through seven multi-level stages, meeting and eating foes along the way. After he consumes his prey, Kirby can copy their abilities fighting fire with fire (sometimes literally).

Enemies regenerate quickly, but Kirby's a buoyant bubble and can soar over obstacles. Addictive mini-games pop up on your path, like Quick Draw (the hysterical twitch samurai game) and Bomb Rally (a four-player version of hot potato), offering life-ups for prizes. Mini-games are also available for quick play.



PROTIP: Gain the powers of your opponents by swallowing them and ducking.



Nightmare in Dreamland really shows off the GBA's graphical capabilities.



Don't Fight With Your Mouth Full

Kirby's detailed graphics take advantage of the GBA's strength while keeping the playing field small to compensate for the tiny screen. Lighting can sometimes be an issue, but that is more a drawback of the system than of the game. The saccharine score is standard Nintendo fare; it will creep into you psyche and have you humming at random intervals throughout the day.

Nightmare in Dream Land provides a truly enjoyable gaming experience. Its gameplay and control are easy to pick up and play, but there is a depth to planning your route and picking your targets. The bosses are appropriately challenging without being frustratingly impossible. While it may not be the type of game you can't wait to pick up, Kirby is a hard one to put down.



PROTIP: Most bosses are best defeated by launching their own attacks back at them, either by swallowing and spitting, or hitting them back.



PROTIP: When taking on multiple opponents, timing is key. If two or more are closely packed, you can take them out in one blow.



- Developed and published by Nintendo
- $29.99
- Platform
- Available December
- 4 players

BY MISS SPELL

FUN FACTOR

EVERYONE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	4.5	4.0	4.5	4.5

"Best on the block" doesn't mean much anymore.



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IT'S A MASTERPIECE, for sure, but anyone who enjoys Link's darker, more sinister tales of human corruption, depravity, and debauchery may want to stay away from his latest legend...A Link to the Past is a little on the "kiddie" side.

In Case Your Sarcasm Detector Is Broken...

The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past is the GBA port of a classic SNES adventure: Every clean sprite, indelible (if a little dated) sound effect, enduring orchestration, and weird gameplay quirk is reproduced with astounding accuracy. Hyrule is a colorful, happy place with a giant pig for a villain and a main character who, at one point, gets turned into a fluffy pink bunny. It's unclear where the notion got started that a "cartoon" Link somehow went against the natural order of things...but it certainly wasn't here.



PROTIP: Go to the Kakariko Library after you get the Pegasus Boots. Knock the book off the shelf so you can translate the tablets outside the shrines.

Most criticisms about A Link to the Past revolve around the lack of a good story. Abstract thought is the draw here—the world is huge and open with tons of secrets and quirky random characters to see, run into, and try your magic powder on. Play requires patience and exploring, and even some upper-level parallel thinking. The challenge/reward structure is masterfully paced, even without a neo-Tolkiensian backdrop or a Hideo Kojima–directed diatribe about the substance of liberty and the price of human social identity.



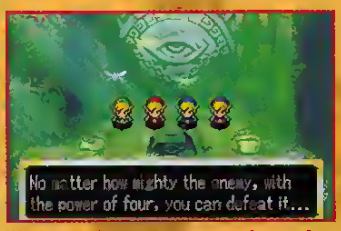
PROTIP: To enter the tower of Here at the top of Death Mountain, travel to the Dark World and use the mirror to return...it all depends on where you stand.

A Link to the Past

Even though the reappearance of A Link to the Past isn't quite the handheld publishing event of Harmony of Dissonance or Metroid Fusion, it's still an important part of The Grand Renaissance of the Second Dimension. So embrace the past, you sophisticated modern gamer you...it will help you get a better handle on what's to come.



PROTIP: Gee, I wonder if that smack-a-chicken-a-couple-dozen-times thing still works? Yup. Still works.



Work with (or against) up to three of your friends to complete dungeons in The Four Swords, a bonus multiplayer game. Every player has to have their own cart, though.



BY STAR DINGO

- Developed by Nintendo/Flagship
- Published by Nintendo
- $29.99
- Adventure
- Available December
- 4 players

FUN FACTOR

EVERYONE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	4.5	4.5	5.0	5.0

Phantasy Star Collection

LET'S CUT STRAIGHT to the chase: Phantasy Star I was groundbreaking in 1987 but is starting to show its age; II looks dull but is secretly one of the best RPGs of the 16-bit era; and III is a black sheep that tried too many new things and missed the mark on most of them.

Digital Eclipse has remained 100 percent faithful to the original games, almost to a fault—you can't quicksave all the time, which is inconvenient on a portable system. The titles also have difficulty levels that no company would dare set their games to today; nearly every encounter is a life-and-death struggle in the first two. Still, if you've never tried them, Phantasy Star I (and especially II) are must-plays for any serious role-playing game scholar.



PROTIP: PSI is a punishing game from the very beginning. Don't venture far beyond the first town until you're at least level 5 or so.



PROTIP: Make sure you raise all your characters evenly in PSII. Leaving them at Rolf's house will make them too weak later on.





BY FENNEC FOX

- Developed by Digital Eclipse/Sega
- Published by THQ
- $29.99
- RPG
- Available now
- 1 player

FUN FACTOR

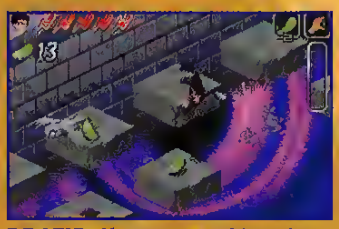
EVERYONE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

HARRY'S SECOND YEAR finds him prettier but not much wiser. Harry and Hogwarts both look a bit bigger and bolder this time, thanks to a new ¾-overhead isometric view, but interacting with that world is still frustrating. Young Potter still can't run very fast, success is measured in boring item collection—knuts, wizard cards, Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans, and whatnot—and most puzzles are tedious switch-and-lever affairs. Diagonal platform hopping isn't much fun with the GBA's cross-key pad, and the Mode 7–style flight sequences aren't thrilling.



PROTIP: To evade Filch in the basement, light the fire with an incendio spell, then grab the invisibility cloak.



PROTIP: You can control Harry's jumps mid-air. It's useful for risky platform hops.

The polyphonic soundtrack isn't bad, but it does repeat quickly. One nice touch: You can unlock extras with a GameCube and link cable. Unfortunately, that's not enough to keep gamers interested in the long term. While Potter fans will enjoy seeing Gilderoy Lockhart on their GBAs, uncompelling gameplay makes him just another pretty face.



BY DAN ELEKTRO

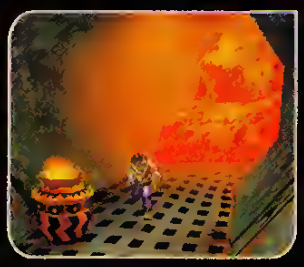
- Developed by Eurocom
- Published by EA Games
- $34.99
- Adventure
- Available now
- 1 player

FUN FACTOR

EVERYONE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0

MIDWAY

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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Mild Violence

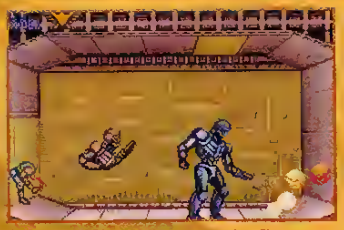
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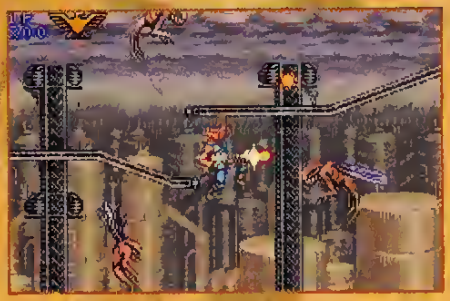
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Contra Advance: The Alien Wars EX



THE GBA IS nothing but a repository for bad ports of SNES games that weren't all that good in the first place. According to some people, anyway. Such close-minded folk will simply have to miss out on this lovely Contra remix, a combination of two of the 16-bit era's best shooters—The Alien Wars (SNES) and The Hard Corps (Genesis)—with some extra stuff thrown in for good measure. There are a few noticeable omissions (the SNES game's overhead levels are gone, and you can't carry multiple weapons or use rocket bombs anymore), but if your knowledge of video game history begins with the PlayStation, then this will be a handy pocket reference to an age that unfortunately passed into the ether long ago.



PROTIP: The H (homing missile) weapon is your best bet for overall protection. It's also the weakest weapon, so switch up for bosses.

As you'd expect from Konami's 16-bit years, The Alien Wars EX features stupendously well-animated characters and a soundtrack that's boopier than you'll remember but still annoyingly catchy as ever. The control's spot-on, too, which is helpful when you consider that the GBA's smaller screen gives you a much tinier margin of error during boss battles (which were already tough enough back on the SNES, keep in mind).

As always, Contra is not a game for wusses—even with limited continues and an 18-letter password system, many gamers will likely give up in despair before reaching the end. Despite (or perhaps because of) this, Contra is one hot 'n' spicy GBA remake that's actually worth the money for a change.

PROTIP: Don't stand on the floor when fighting these guys. Hanging out on the top-left corner keeps you from most of their attacks.



BY FENNEC FOX

- Developed by KCE Tokyo
- Published by Konami
- $29.99
- Action
- Available now
- 2 players

ESRB: E (Everyone)

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.0	3.5	4.5	4.0

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

LIKE LAST YEAR'S Sorcerer's Stone, the little magical man's sophomoric Game Boy Color outing is a charming if standard 2D RPG. Winning random, turn-based encounters will earn you enough experience to learn more powerful spells, while new spells are created by collecting and combining Famous Witches and Wizards cards. The game is of surprising depth and length, and fans will definitely dig Potter's magical duels and Quidditch matches with other Hogwarts alumni.



PROTIP: Gain more experience by challenging higher-level students to magical duels.



BY PONG SIFU

- Developed by Griptonite Games
- Published by EA Games
- $29.99
- RPG
- Available now
- 1 player

ESRB: E (Everyone)

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.0	4.5	4.0	3.5

Star Wars: The New Droid Army

FLUIDLY ANIMATED 3D characters, dull 2D environments, authentic lightsaber sound effects, and muffled music paint the picture for this *Episode II* side-story, a one-note adventure of fierce button tapping broken up by stretches of aimless wandering. The controls are serviceable but clunky (targeting enemies isn't always easy) and the missions are vague, but killer 'saber combos and Force powers like Push and Speed help inject a bit of strategy into the simplistic action. Without varied gameplay, however, this Droid Army ultimately puts up a weak fight.



PROTIP: Bat laser bolts back at enemies...just like in the movies! Time your lightsaber swing slightly early and use combo strings.



BY VICIOUS SID

- Developed by Helixe
- Published by THQ
- $29.99
- Action/ adventure
- Available now
- 1 player

ESRB: E (Everyone)

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.0	3.5	3.5	3.0

Virtua Tennis

PERHAPS THE MOST engaging of all video game sports titles spreads its addictive gameplay to the GBA. Even with sluggish controls and so-so visuals, Virtua Tennis still delivers, especially in the winning career mode where you train your custom-made athletes (both male and female) to become the number-one ranked in the world. Brand-new skill-building mini-games offer fun yet sometimes frustrating challenges to both your patience and nimble fingers. Still, Virtua Tennis is the best racquet on the GBA for your money—and, of course, the four-player action makes this tennis game an absolute blast.



PROTIP: Serve down the center with high or maxed power to get your opponent off balance.



BY FOUR-EYED DRAGON

- Developed by Sega
- Published by THQ
- $29.99
- Tennis
- Available now
- 4 players

ESRB: E (Everyone)

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
3.5	3.0	3.0	3.5

Hamtaro: Ham-Hams Unite!

NINTENDO EXCELS AT enticing people to explore strange new worlds. Hamtaro is no different as you burrow down into the secret land of the Ham-Hams (GB versions of hamsters)–and they're soooo cuuuute! The "adventure" takes Hamtaro on a "quest" to find the other Ham-Hams. Along the way, you'll learn to speak Ham-Chat (Ham-ha means "hello") and maybe dance a Ham-Jam. It's harmless fun that's oddly compelling. This game has "kids merchandising hit" written all over it because Hamtaro's soooo cuuuute!



Hamtaro is a cutesy little adventure with cutesy little critters that just grows on you.



BY BROTHER BUZZ

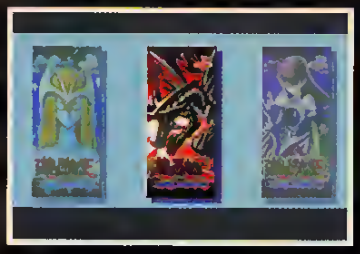
- Developed and published by Nintendo
- $29.99
- Available now
- 1 player
- Action/ adventure

ESRB: E (Everyone)

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.0	3.5	4.0	4.0

Yu-Gi-Oh!™ THE ETERNAL DUELIST SOUL™

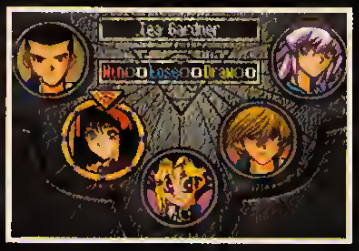
DUEL MONSTERS ARRIVES ON THE GAME BOY® ADVANCE



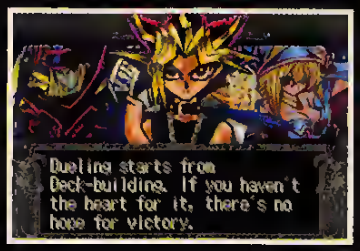
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Create a deck with over 800 cards full of new monsters, magic and traps



Duel against a friend or challenge Yugi, Kaiba, Joey and all your favorites from the TV show



Win the World Championship Tournament and become the ultimate duelist



Includes Three Limited Edition Trading Cards!

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

GAME BOY ADVANCE

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The Revenge of Shinobi

HANDHELD NINJA GOODNESS is what you'd expect from any game bearing the Shinobi title, but that's not the case here. Don't confuse this game with the 16-bit Sega Genesis classic as they're two completely different games.



PROTIP: The running slash allows you to get good position, which is handy when facing multiple enemies.

Revenge plays out like a standard action title complete with slashing swords and flying shurikens. Unfortunately, you get a limited supply of throwing stars and slicing up the bad guys quickly gets repetitive. The graphics are generic, but the audio presentation is quite nice. The Game Boy Advance has a large library of average side-scrolling action games, and Revenge of Shinobi is just a slight notch above them. This game is worth looking into only if you're big on ninjas.



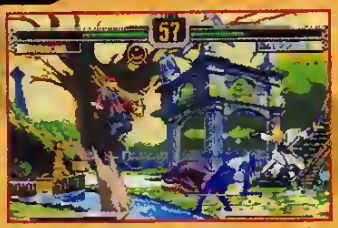
PROTIP: Conserve your shurikens and use them only on really tough enemies.

- Developed by 3d6 Games
- Published by THQ
- $29.99
- Action
- Available now
- 1 player

BY KILOWATT

ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	3.5	4.0	3.5	2.5

Guilty Gear X Advance Edition



PROTIP: In 3-on-3 mode, motion ↓ ↘ → and then simultaneously press A and B to summon your waiting teammates for a Dual Combination. Try this move in the air.



PROTIP: Try an Instant Kill as long as your Tension Gauge is partially full. Simultaneously press all four attack buttons, then perform the specific move for your character (Sol Badguy's is ↓ ↘ → ↓ ↘ → + A).

AFTER NEARLY A year in publishing limbo, the handheld version of one of the purdiest durn Street Fighter–style 2D fighting games ever made finally hits the Game Boy Advance. It's clear the programmers were given two directives: make sure all 14 characters look good and animate smoothly, and make sure it plays as close to the original as possible. While they definitely hit their marks, those two GGX fundamentals apparently sucked up all the prime ROM real estate: The trademark special effects fireworks are gone, most backgrounds seem like pale, watercolor imitations of the originals (you can count the colors on two hands), and the audio track is atrocious. If you're a Guilty Gear nut, this will definitely do you right on the road…but most casual fight fans will wanna stick with the superior Street Fighter Alpha 3.

- Developed by Arc System Works
- Published by Sammy Studios
- $29.99
- Fighting
- Available now
- 2 players

BY STAR DINGO

ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
T	4.0	1.5	3.5	3.5

Super Monkey Ball Jr.

AFTER INFESTING GAMECUBES across the country last year, Super Monkey Ball Jr. brings its party/puzzle gameplay to the Game Boy Advance. Sadly, Monkey Target mode is missing, but at least players can unlock classic mini-games by earning Play Points in over 60 single-player levels. Thanks to uncooperative camera views and tight time limits, however, the main game often alternates between masterful and maddening. With practice, using the GBA directional pad becomes second nature.

While kids will love the cheerful graphics and cute characters, adults can marvel at the simple but polished 3D levels. The music is subdued, and the bouncy sound effects come straight from the GameCube predecessor. Super Monkey Ball Jr. faithfully recaptures the best features, like the mindless mini-games and multiplayer modes (four players via link cable) of the original. Puzzle fans should attend this Ball.



PROTIP: 100 bananas grant you an extra life, so nab 10 at once by aiming for bunches. Just don't let it distract you from reaching the goal on time because continues are limited.



PROTIP: To reach the extra missions in the Beginner mode, beat all 10 levels without using a single continue. As a nice bonus, you'll snag more Play Points for unlocking mini-games.

- Developed by Creations Group
- Published by THQ
- $29.99
- Party
- Available now
- 4 players

BY VICIOUS SID

ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.5

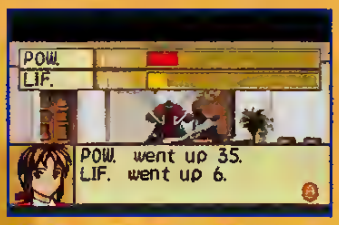
Monster Rancher Advance 2

IF YOU ALREADY own the original Monster Rancher Advance, the sequel to the fun-despite-itself Pokémon clone brings very little new elements to the table—unless you count a few new monster types, different backgrounds and training animations, a hospital where you can surgically remove your monsters' "bad traits," and link-cable monster breeding.

All the old curious Monster Rancher flaws are still there, including the inane battle system that feels like you're struggling against a slide bar, mind-berating music, and repetitious cycle of stat-building—but breeder-type personalities will still find something inexplicably addictive about Ranching on the Game Boy Advance. The game's never-ending cycle of monsters and simple week-by-week structure makes it a perfect pick-up-and-play-for-a-minute-or-a-day portable title. It's worth picking up if you don't have the original—but early Monster adopters won't find enough new here to justify an upgrade.



PROTIP: Strike when the enemy is confused (look for the "???" to appear) because you'll double your odds of scoring a hit.



PROTIP: Sparring is a great way to learn new attacks. Take advantage of every AGIMA sale.

- Developed and published by Tecmo
- $29.99
- Simulation
- Available now
- 1 player

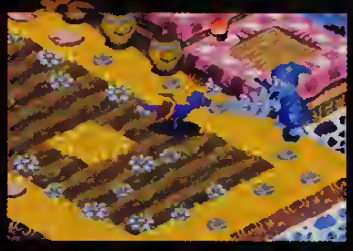
BY STAR DINGO

ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	4.0	3.0	2.5	4.0

HE'S DISHING OUT A DOUBLE BLAST OF

DEEP FRIED AND DEEP FREEZE.









SPYRO 2 SEASON OF FLAME

spyrothedragon.com

Spyro's taking his breath to a new degree in Spyro 2: Season of Flame for Game Boy® Advance. With fire, ice and four playable characters: Spyro, Sparx, Agent 9 and Shelia the Kangaroo, this one's going to be an adventure of breathtaking proportions.

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Xtreme Legends™

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3™



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7 Untold Stories

Play as 7 fierce generals in Musou mode: Lu Bu, Diao Chan, Meng Huo, Zhu Rong, Zhang Jiao, Dong Zhuo and Yuan Shao. Completely revamped stages with new scenarios and events.

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Assign playable characters, including Lu Bu, as your bodyguards. Use Double Musou Attacks in a one-player game. Select the gender, uniform, and weapon for each guard in your unit.

- Discover 5th Weapons and New Items!
- Four New Challenge Modes!
- New "Very Hard" Difficulty Level!
- 2-Player Co-op & Versus Modes!

DW3 REMIX!!! Play XTREME LEGENDS by itself or with Dynasty Warriors 3 to power up the original with new XL features. Memory Card data is fully compatible between both games.

MSRP $29.99

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The patent application claiming "Character Group Battle Method" is pending before the USPTO

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for Rating Information.

StarCraft: Ghost



"Hey! Who's up there? Get down here or you're history!" "Heh! Come and get it, sucker!" Cue assorted M-rated sound effects.

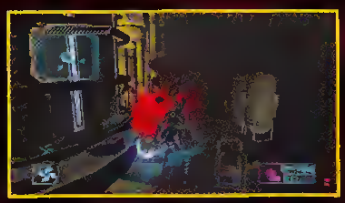
You Mean It's Not Rock 'n' Roll Racing?

When Blizzard announced it would be showing a console-exclusive title at the Tokyo Game Show earlier this year, most game writers couldn't help but let their imaginations go wild. StarCraft 2! WarCraft 4! Some kind of wacky 3D Diablo! Anything's possible! In the end, though, Blizzard itself had the last laugh: All these guesses were nowhere near what was actually unveiled.

StarCraft: Ghost may take place in the same universe as the classic computer RTS, but you can throw out your PC mouse right now—it's a 3D tactical-action game similar in style to Metal Gear Solid. You'll be in control of Nova, an elite Ghost operative sent on a series of covert missions in space. Nova is one very powerful lady: Besides the usual stealth moves and firepower, she'll be able to cloak herself, move at hyper speeds (i.e. bullet time), and call for support forces in the middle of missions.





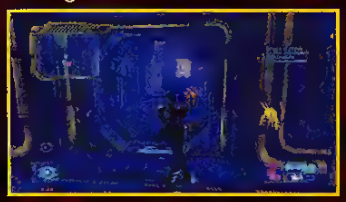




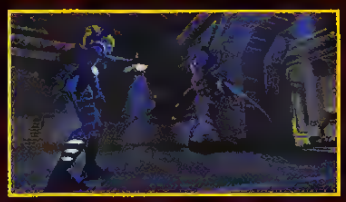


The Trouble with Zergs

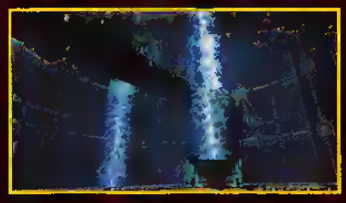
The demo Blizzard showed off in Tokyo revealed the MGS-style flexibility and smooth action the game is already capable of. Ghost will begin with Nova breaking into a rogue Terran base, sneaking past armored guards and using her psionic abilities to detect enemies through walls. As it turns out, someone is using this base to experiment on StarCraft's Zerg aliens, who (being aliens) decide to escape and kill everyone in sight. It will be up to Nova to dispose of these nasties with her arsenal of StarCraft-inspired weaponry—everything from Gauss Rifles to Perdition Flamethrowers.

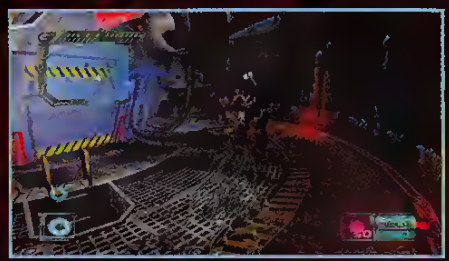








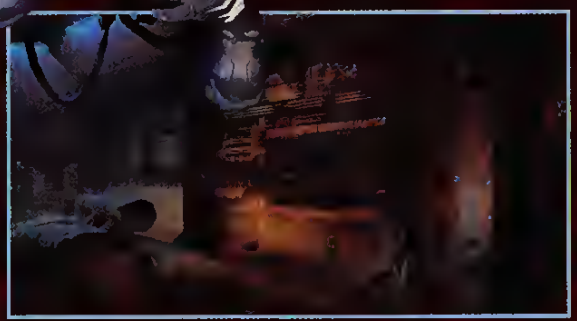








Blizzard and co-developer Nihilistic Software (PC RPG Vampire: The Masquerade) are busy adding a level of detail to Ghost that's rarely seen on console action games. One example: Nova will be able to take down armored guards with one hit by shooting them in the face when their visors are down—a very satisfying way to deal with wimpy enemies. Effects like this should help StarCraft: Ghost rise above the pack when it hits all three consoles simultaneously late this year.



FIND OUT MORE ONLINE

BY FENNEC FOX



- Developed by Blizzard/ Nihilistic Software
- Published by Blizzard
- Target release date: Fourth Quarter 2003

PLAYSTATION 2 GAMECUBE XBOX

FIRST LOOK

You think you're tough? This game is tough.

It's even tougher when you gotta play with a rodent on your shoulder.



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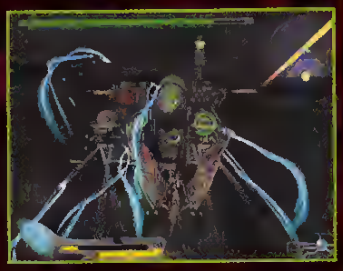
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Panzer Dragoon ORTA

Legend of the Dragoon





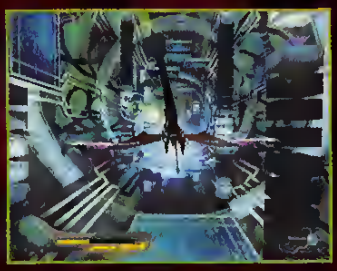


Once upon a time, Sega unleashed a little title called Panzer Dragoon onto its fledgling Saturn console. Featuring a vividly imaginative fantasy world, the game quickly garnered a small but vocal following and enjoyed two more installments before the curtains drew to an unfortunate close for Sega's 32-bit system.

Enter Panzer Dragoon ORTA for the Xbox, which looks to finally get the series the widespread acclaim its fans feel it so deeply deserves. As in the first two games, the gameplay will most closely resemble a shooter, although it will feature some strategic elements borrowed from the RPG hybrid, Panzer Dragoon Saga. The shooting action will take place all around your Dragoon, requiring you to move the 360-degree camera frequently. Movement will always be restricted to whatever one direction the game dictates, but there will still be a surprising amount of depth to discover. Hands-on time with the game so far has revealed very intense action and many secrets to unlock.



Panzer Dragoon ORTA will feature dazzling landscapes and never-before-seen creatures of fantasy.



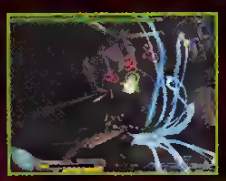


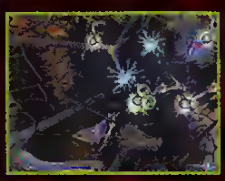
More Than Meets the Eye

The series' graphics have always been remarkable, and ORTA will take full advantage of the powerful Xbox hardware. The preview version already contained all the unique design touches that flesh out this fully realized world.

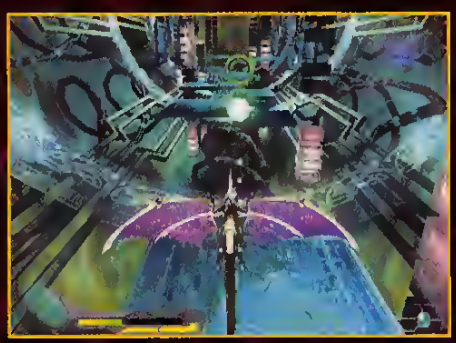
Lush, orchestral music is another Panzer tradition that will return for the Microsoft debut. Fans can look forward to grand, sweeping overtures alternating with subdued mood music, which will reflect the onscreen action.

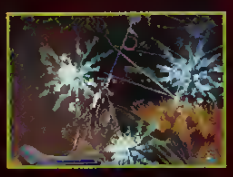


















Good Thing Coming

It's been almost four years since the world has seen any Dragoons, and now their reappearance is right around the corner. Originally scheduled to swoop into stores before Christmas, the game has been pushed back to January to give developer Smilebit a little more time to polish off any imperfections. Judging by the quality of the preview version, though, Panzer Dragoon ORTA should be worth the wait.





BY TOKYO DRIFTER

- Developed by Smilebit
- Published by Sega
- Target release date: January

Xbox

HANDS-ON


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Sting Like A Bee
- Kain
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XBOX
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BEST OF E3
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MATURE
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CONTENT RATED BY
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Violence



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PREY ON THE DEAD... OR THE DEAD WILL PREY ON YOU.

LET THE HUNT BEGIN ON NINTENDO GAMECUBE™



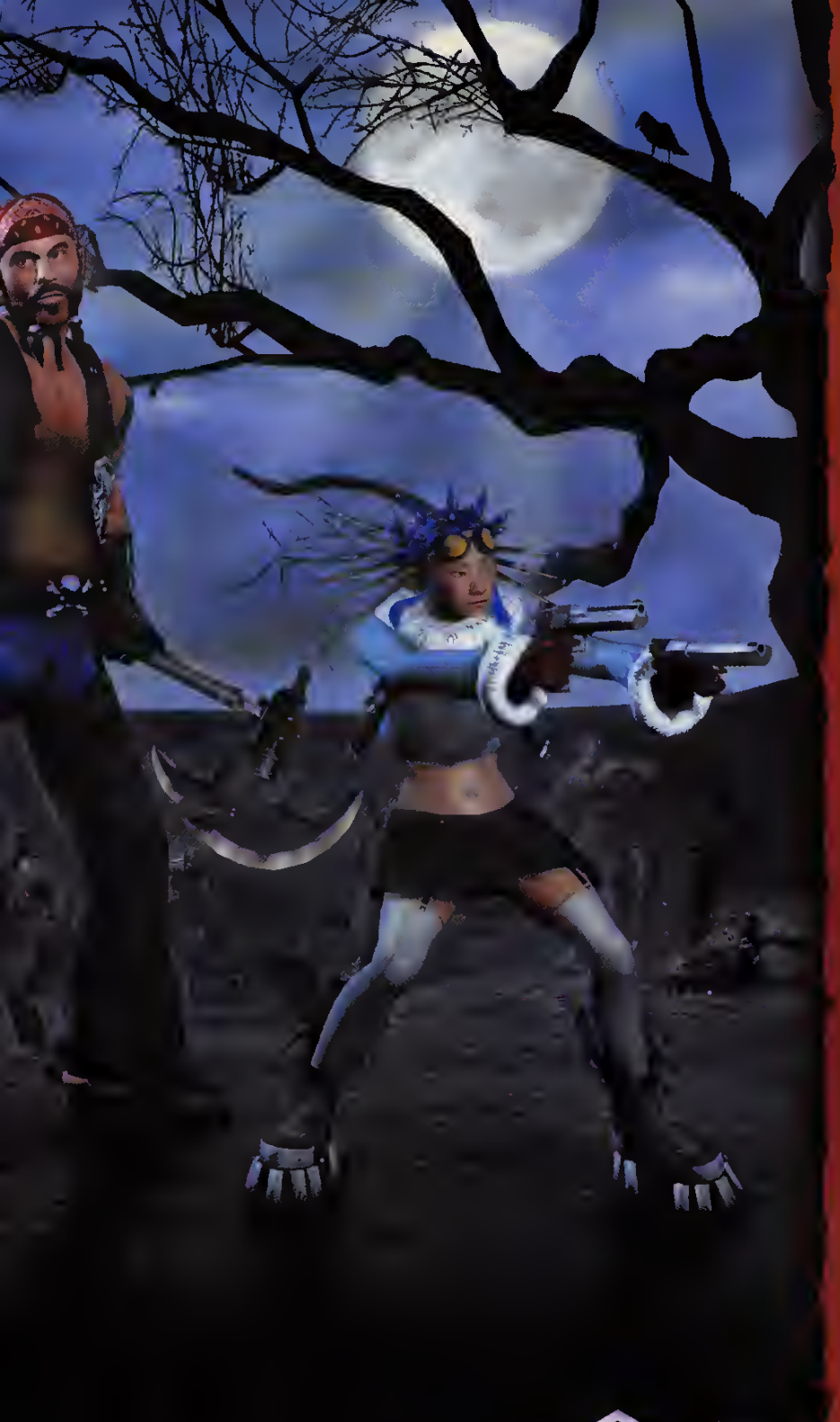
Fight zombies, vampires and ghouls on your own as one of 4 unique Hunters, or battle evil cooperatively with up to 4 players on a single screen.



Attack 20 types of creatures in swarms of up to 30 at once using 20 melee, ranged and spell weapons—from swords to axes and flamethrowers.



Slay in brutal single- and multi-player action through 23 huge environments, including a prison, gothic church, cemetery and torture chamber.



HUNTER THE RECKONING

DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

"GAME OF THE MONTH"
–Playboy Magazine (July, 2002)

"Be warned: When you're done, your Spidey senses will be tingling almost as much as your tired fingers."
–Entertainment Weekly

"Hunter is a joy. I dream about this game. I don't have to stop to think 'what game do I wanna play tonight,' because I already know. It's all about the Hunter." **–IGN.com**

"Hunter comes through as one of the most fun, frenetic, addictive, multiplayer action shoot 'em ups on Xbox, and, most likely any system."
–Official Xbox Magazine

"★★★★★ (out of 5)...if you have even the slightest interest in removing zombie infestations, Hunter: The Reckoning is the game you've been waiting for your entire life."
–Adrenaline Vault

NINTENDO GAMECUBE. XBOX

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Violence

Interplay

DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE SOFTWARE

DIGITAL DM MAYHEM

www.interplay.com/hunter

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Gio Gio's Bizarre Adventure







HEROES WHO ATTACK enemies by making trees grow through them... giant zippers that rend holes in space-time...girls that project tiny combat aeroplanes out of their hearts...enemies that can be beaten through clever use of everyday objects you find in your house (yes, your real house)...come on, how could you not want to play this game?

Everyone's favorite androgynous Italian from the 1920s is making his(?) fantastically abnormal PS2 debut in Gio Gio's Bizarre Adventure, an aptly titled "manga-shaded" action/fighting game based on a small portion of one of Japan's weirdest, longest-running series. Instead of being a 2D Street Fighter–ish brawler like previous games in the series, this bizarre adventure will essentially be a string of mini-boss battles connected by insane cut-scenes as you take control of a character and its associated Stand (a sort of battle-ready soul) to best a string of unsettling, confusing foes.



Even the combat controls in the Japanese version were weird (how many games have an "eject soul" button?) but tight in the Capcom tradition. The lack of any camera control made it easy to lose track of your prey...though the big Buddha with the banana-gun went a long way to make up that particular shortcoming.

Note: This preview is based on the boxed Japanese version of the game.







BY STAR DINGO

- Developed and published by Capcom
- Target release date: November

PLAYSTATION 2

HANDS-ON

A Sound of Thunder



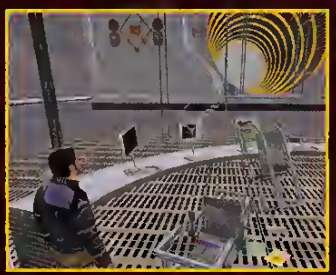


MESS WITH THE flow of time, and mutant dinosaurs will bust up your Pinto...that's the lesson to be learned in this upcoming Ray Bradbury story–turned-movie-turned PS2 game. A Sound of Thunder will put you in the role of Travis Ryer, a "time tour guide" who wakes up one day to find Chicago ravaged by giant prehistoric killer plants and repellent dinosaur-analogue monsters; now it's up to Travis to leap between the past and the not-quite-right present to put things back in place...and shoot lots of unpleasant beasties and fanatical human time-cultists in the process.





A Sound of Thunder is being developed by the same folks responsible for The Thing, a game known for its innovative "fear/trust" gameplay mechanic. A Sound of Thunder is doing a few innovative things of its own—kill the wrong dinosaur in the past, for example, and new mutations and events will arise in the present. You'll be given a spiffy "disruptor" weapon (it suspends enemies in an iridescent pillar of frozen time) to keep that sort of thing to a minimum—but hey, accidents happen.









BY STAR DINGO

- Developed by Computer Artworks
- Published by BAM! Entertainment
- Target release date: Second Quarter 2003

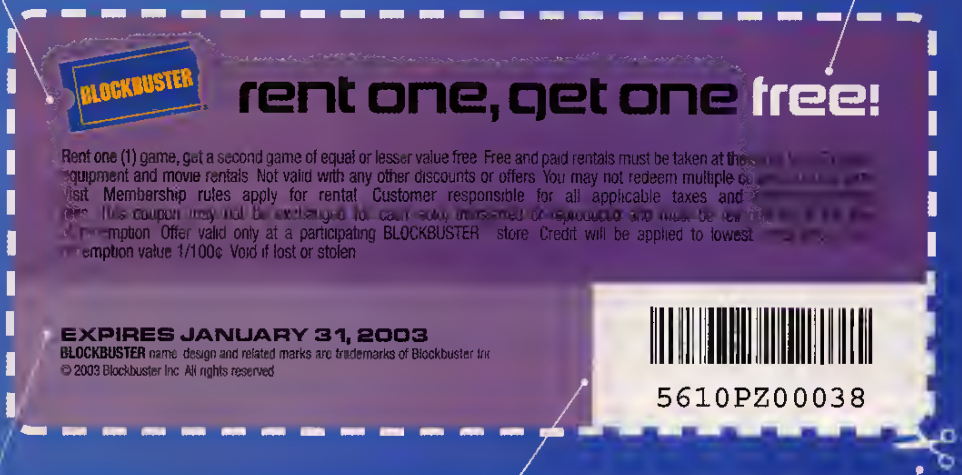
PLAYSTATION 2

FIRST LOOK

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EVERYTHING EXPIRES
Open your fridge and take a big fat whiff of your milk. Nothing lasts forever. So get your butt movin'.

KNOW YOUR CODES
Open all levels with this cheat? Maybe. If not, try dialin' it. You might just get yourself a date.

TRIM HERE
Rip it, tear it, or pull it out. Whatever you do, DON'T run with scissors.

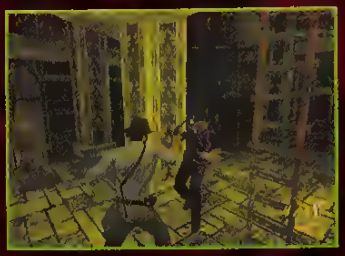
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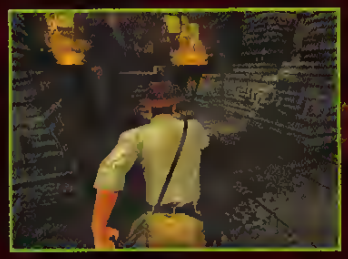
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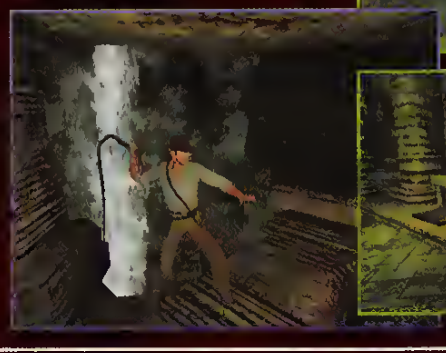
Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb

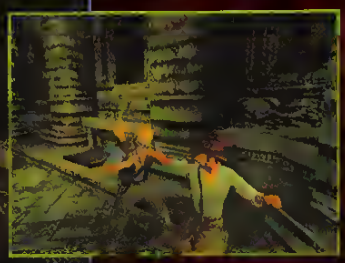












IN THIS LATEST Indiana Jones quest, you'll take control of the famed archeologist and prevent the "Heart of the Dragon" from falling into the wrong hands. You'll travel to the dense jungles of Ceylon, explore the underwater palaces in Istanbul, and fight through the streets of Hong Kong as you try to piece together an ancient mystery surrounding the powerful antique.





A hands-on preview of the game played fairly well. Despite the predictable platform hopping—which is found in other...um, tomb raiding–type games—Indy pulled off some cool moves that kept the game interesting. For instance, as in the *Indiana* movies, you could use your whip to not only scar attacking enemies, but also swing across crevices. Your arsenal will also include a machete to cut through brush and a canteen that was cleverly designed to be your source for health. Essentially, if you get hurt, you'll just drink water from the canteen to recoup. "X" marks the spot (in more ways than one) if development stays on course with this newest addition to the Indiana Jones adventure series.

BY FOUR EYED DRAGON



- Developed and published by LucasArts
- Target release date: January

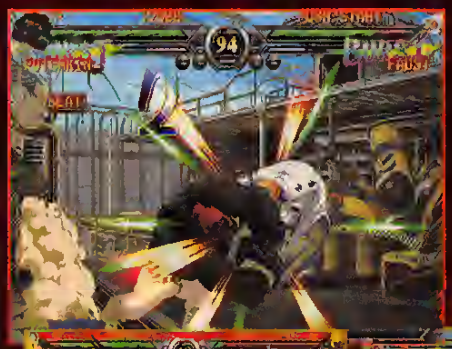
Xbox

HANDS-ON

Guilty Gear X2





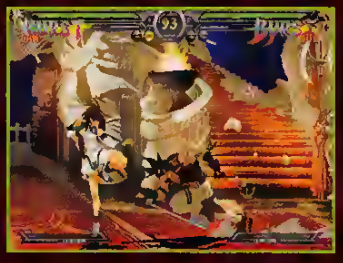




GUILTY GEAR X2 is gorgeous—that's the first thing you'll notice before picking your jaw off the ground. The game will feature twice as much detail as other major 2D fighters on the market—the Guilty Gear X series is known to be visually groundbreaking. Thankfully, there was more to the preview version of X2 than just stunning graphics, such as compelling characters and a fighting system that was easy to learn, yet hard to master.

The token story concerns powerful biological weapons known as "Gears" and, once again, the Guilty Gear tournament will determine who is potent enough to combat this threat. The 20 characters (six are new) are inspired by designer Daisuke Ishiwatari's love for manga and rock 'n' roll, and will wield glowing swords, anchors, yo-yos, and even huge lengths of hair to slash each other to death. The fighting system has been refined a bit over the original's, too, and the added play modes could turn the Guilty series into a respectable fighter.









BY SIMON LIMON



- Developed by ARC System Works
- Published by Sammy Studios
- Target release date: Spring 2003

PlayStation 2

HANDS-ON

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PlayStation.2

tick

tick

tick

tick

tick

boom.

Push any good guy too far, eventually he's gonna make some bad things happen. Ex-cop Jack Slate is no exception. But when he explodes, things are going to be worse than you can ever imagine. So be sure to watch your backs, thugs. Your time's running out.





Dead to Rights™

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Mature Sexual Themes
Violence

XBOX

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

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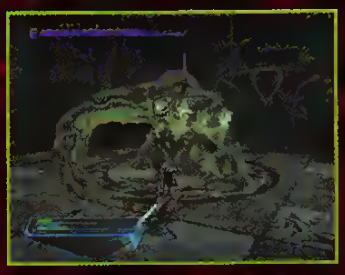
Crimson Sea



ARRRRRRRRR, AVAST, YE mateys, and prepare to set sail on oceans of blood in Koei's Crimson S...oh, wait, it's *not* a game about pirates? Well then, steel thy inner honor and prepare to relive the history of ancient China as a...wait, it's not an Asian history game either?! No, indeed, Koei's latest will take you into the surreal depths of space as hero-for-hire Sho and his band of merry misfits take on the Muton Void with the powers of sound, Neo-Psionics, and an arsenal of laser swords that turn into guns.













Crimson Sea is a third-person, Dynasty Warriors–style action game with an utterly bizarre Final Fantasy–esque story and presentation. Enemies from the Void will include animated globs of sentient liquid and biblical swarms of insectoid adversaries that bear down on you hundreds at a time. While the preview build was a winner in both concept and presentation, there were still a few control kinks (stiff character movement, an ineffective lock-on system, and a disorienting camera prone to sharp angle changes) keeping it grounded. Koei hopes to iron those problems out in the final stages of development.



BY STAR DINGO

- Developed and published by Koei
- Target release date: December

Xbox

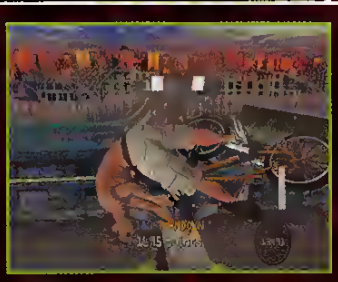
HANDS-ON

BMX XXX



DESPITE GROWING controversy and the loss of cover boy Dave Mirra, BMX XXX is staying on course, and, as Acclaim's slogan states, "keeping it dirty." As the title suggests, BMX XXX will not be suitable for the younger crowd, and it will feature audio and visual content equivalent to an R-rated movie—keep that in mind if you're looking for a BMX title this holiday season.













The preview version featured smooth controls and extensive areas to explore, along with basic level objectives that you could tackle at any time and some story-driven goals that required you to complete a task within a given time limit. The visuals will be upgraded from last year's Mirra, too. Additionally, the game will feature female riders and a smooth 60 frames per second. Extensive Create-A-Rider and Create-A-Park modes will enable you to customize your experience to your heart's content, too, and over 2000 different tricks and moves will be packed into the game. BMX XXX will also be available for the PlayStation 2 and GameCube.



BY TOKYO DRIFTER



- Developed by Z-Axis
- Published by Acclaim
- Target release date: November

Xbox

HANDS-ON



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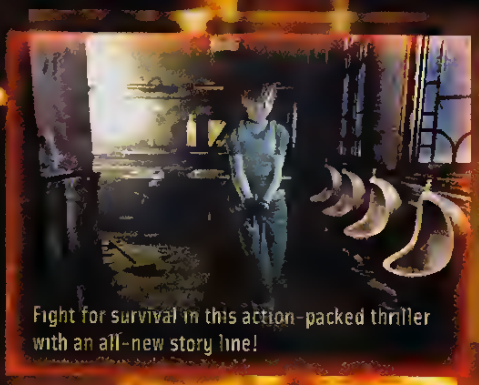
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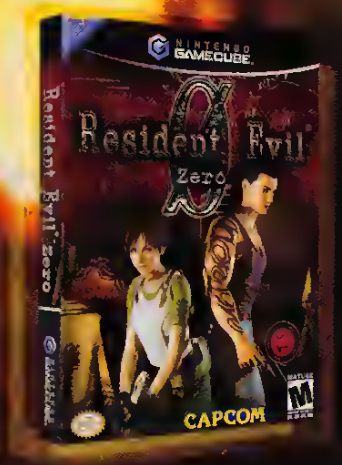
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Resident Evil Zero

RED*FACTION.II

COMMONWEALTH COUP

The Red Faction is using their entire arsenal in the latest attempt to



Aesir Fighter 2.0

FROM THE AIR

The Red Faction customized Aesir is a maneuverable air assault vehicle equipped with optical zoom which allows for precise hits on enemy targets.



Drop Point *5:37am*
Troops assemble at the Sopot Harbor.

SOPOT CITY

CIVILIAN UPRISING

After Sopot's forces withdrew from the main city, several Red Faction rebels raided Harbor Island and desecrated the symbolic statue of the dictator.

RED FACTION II

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Violence

For more up-to-the-minute coverage of the conflict, go to *www.redfaction2.com*

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BREAKDOWN

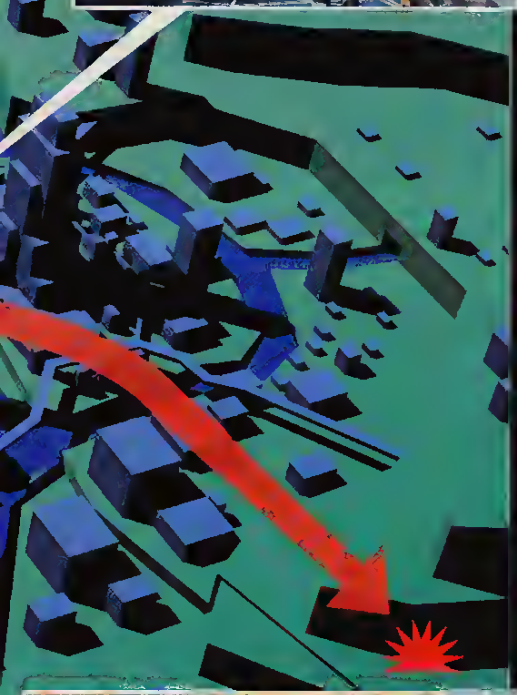
D'ETAT

overthrow the Dictator Sopot.



Public Information Building *6:05am*
Commonwealth Elite Guards attempt to fend off the attacking Faction soldiers.







The Slums *6:22am*
Rebel soldiers continue to fight despite rumors of growing animosity between Faction leaders.

THE REBELS

SUPER SOLDIERS

[illegible]IAS, the best of the Facti[illegible] per Soldiers, is shown [illegible] motion gear.



NGL & Nanotech Grenade Launcher

Demolition Charges

Battle Armored Personal Combat System

THE WEAPONRY

These are [illegible] of the many weapons at the disposal of the [illegible]ed Factio[illegible]



CMRD-32 MAGNETIC RAIL DRIVER

Fires metal slugs that go through just about any barrier without [illegible] targeting scope makes this weapon extremely accurate.



N.I.C.W. - NANOTECH INDIVIDUAL COMBAT WEAPON

Capable of delivering automatic armor-piercing rounds as well as launching grenades



CAR-72 MILITARY ASSAULT RIFLE

Fully-automatic, high powered rifle in a lightweight compact [illegible]

PlayStation.2

volition

THQ

www.thq.com

Dynasty Warriors 3: Xtreme Legends



DYNASTY WARRIORS 3: Xtreme Legends may not be much of a departure from its million-selling ancestor, but if you couldn't get enough of DW3, you'll be glad to know that XL will delve deeper into the saga of the Three Kingdoms by introducing seven new unaligned warriors. If you're new to the franchise, XL will play as a standalone game, but it will also work in conjunction with DW3, so you'll be able to edit bodyguards from your old save files. Amidst the inexplicably entertaining button mashing frenzy of tactical action, a new feature will enable you to handpick your bodyguards and equip them with all manner of magic items and weapons. Koei is also adding four new challenge modes, which will allow for quick, non-plotted hack-n-slash action.

Occasional camera problems and disappearing sprites didn't detract too much from the gameplay in the Japanese boxed version, and the split-screen multiplayer mode wasn't too taxing on the graphics engine at all. The map areas were well designed for the strategic melee, but some levels were made artificially harder by poor placement of healing items. After four levels, the difficulty suddenly spiked upward, but at the same time, so did the interest in winning. Dynasty Warriors 3: Xtreme Legends will hit stores in January.

Note: This preview is based on the Japanese boxed version of the game.













BY DJ DINOROT

- Developed by W-Force Omega
- Published by Koei
- Target release date: January

PLAYSTATION 2

HANDS-ON

James Cameron's Dark Angel



ELECTRO MAGNETIC Pulse: a virtual wave that would knock out all our communication and informational systems, turning America into a third-world country overnight. In Dark Angel, this is the bleak future that action king James Cameron has created, both on TV and in the game. Meet Max, your typical genetically enhanced super-soldier trying to help the oppressed while keeping herself and her "siblings" free from the clutches of the Manticore, the secret military organization that created them. Max is aided by Logan Cale, a well-to-do do-gooder whose access to technology keeps Max a step ahead of her pursuers.









Radical has re-created the post-pulse, future-shabby Seattle in drab detail, scoring extra points for nabbing Jessica Alba and Michael Weatherly to reprise their roles from the famed TV series. Max will have to use her enhanced abilities and a mix of hand-to-hand and stealth moves to get through missions and barricades. Advanced fighting tactics will be unlocked through a "rage system" as Max gets in touch with her inner soldier. The stealth moves were difficult to perform in the early build, but Dark Angel may be on track to take on the likes of Buffy and the Angel of Darkness herself, Lara Croft.





BY MISS SPELL

- Developed by Radical
- Published by Sierra
- Target release date: November

PLAYSTATION 2 XBOX

HANDS-ON

win • win • win • win • win • win • win • win • win

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SEGA® OVERWORKS™ PlayStation.2

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Blood and Gore Violence

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You deserve coal yo ho ho.
BAD HART

Thanks for exploring the gaming galaxy with us, mates! Have a right boozer holiday!
—Starr Dingod

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Don't mess with the rest!
GamePro's #1!
-Major Mike

Best wishes to you and your fami
Jen X

The best joy in life is to smile from th heart—have fun th holiday season!
Four-Eyed Drag

BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR!



...is good...
...& have fun!
...TOMIC DAWG

...s for reading GamePro—
...aine why we're here!
Happy Holidays
Dan Elektro

Wishing you a peaceful, happy holiday season! Thanks for reading GamePro!
Air Hendrix

Lead, Follow, or Get out of the way! —Peace Beefcake

Holiday Blessings
Miss Spell

Let a friend know you care this Holiday season.
All the best.
Brother Buzz

To all the GamePro readers with love,
The Viken (my paw print!)

Thank you for reading. If it wasn't for you, I'd be... well... very despondent!!
Enjoy the holiday... Fen

You guys rule!
Keep spreading the peace and love!
Pong Sifu



EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

PlayStation.2

XBOX

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

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TY the Tasmanian Tiger

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Legends of Wrestling 2



WRESTLING TODAY ISN'T what it used to be, but you'll soon relive the olden days with Legends of Wrestling 2. This year's model will feature over 65 wrestlers, including previously omitted fan-faves like Rowdy Roddy Piper, Andre the Giant, and Sid Vicious. Plus, more match types and game modes will try to lure you back into the ring. All the preview versions felt a bit awkward, and the PS2 version's graphics lagged noticeably behind those of the other two consoles, but the retro flava of LOW2 just might make up for that.









BY D-PAD DESTROYER



- Developed by Acclaim Salt Lake City
- Published by Acclaim
- Target release date: November

PLAYSTATION 2 GAMECUBE XBOX

HANDS-ON

Evil Dead: A Fistful of Boomstick





YOU JUST CAN'T keep a good zombie down as evidenced in Evil Dead: A Fistful of Boomstick, the video game sequel to the *Evil Dead* movie trilogy. You'll play as the chainsaw-wielding hero, Ash, who must battle hordes of Deadites with a variety of additional weapons, including a shovel, gatling gun, and shotgun. By the looks of it, this game won't pull any punches (or limbs) from its campy horror origins, so you'll be in store for a good ol' bloody horrorfest when A Fistful of Boomstick ships.







Note: All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.

BY DR. ZOMBIE



- Developed by VIS Interactive
- Published by THQ
- Target release date: Spring 2003

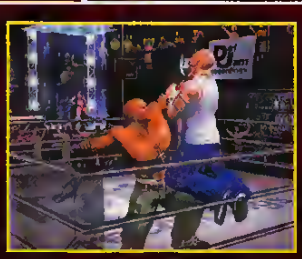
PLAYSTATION 2 XBOX

FIRST LOOK

Def Jam Vendetta



EVER WONDERED WHAT would happen if DMX stepped into the ring with Ludacris? Of course you have. Someone at EA finally did, too, and the result is Def Jam Vendetta, a bizarre fusion of wrestling and hip-hop. Vendetta's most controversial aspect will surely be the playa-hatin' taunts (two for each character), which will help you earn cred and bling bling. It's disappointing, however, to note that Flava Flav and LL Cool J are not among the 12 artists deemed worthy of transubstantiation. Next thing you know, Death Row is gonna have its own box-dragging puzzle game....









Note: All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.

BY DJ DINOBOT



- Developed by Aki
- Published by EA Sports Big
- Target release date: March

PLAYSTATION 2 GAMECUBE

FIRST LOOK

Seek and Destroy

HOW MUCH WOULD you pay for 25 missions with more than 100 tanks? Before you answer, throw in a pair of two-player modes: head-to-head and co-op. Search and Destroy is a tank combat game aimed squarely at the cash-strapped gamer with a meager price of just $14.99. In the preview build, navigation was difficult due to a dearth of directional aids and an unresponsive camera. Customization options, however, were plentiful. If it can get the basics right, Takara will have a solid entry for the no-frills world of budget gaming.









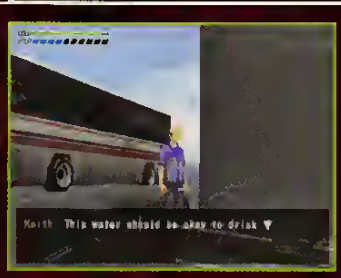
BY DJ DINOBOT



- Developed by Takara
- Published by Conspiracy Entertainment
- Target release date: November

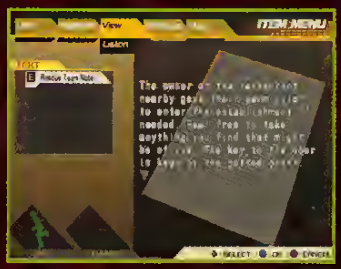
PLAYSTATION 2

HANDS-ON



Disaster Report

SOME PEOPLE SAY that an earthquake is nothing more than the Earth giving you a massage. (Well, very uninformed people do, anyway.) The preview version of Disaster Report, though troubled by slowdown in spots, proved how silly this notion is—it's an adventure game where aftershocks from The Big One make the ground crumble before your eyes every step of the way. The sheer tension of traversing the ruins of Capital City already ranked up there with Silent Hill and other survival/horror greats—you can see how it comes together in January.









BY FENNEC FOX



- Developed by Irem
- Published by Agetec
- Target release date: January

PLAYSTATION 2

HANDS-ON

Vazhar
by Full Sail Graduate
Brian Germain

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Army Men: Sarge's War





TEN-HUT! 3DO'S POPULAR Army Men franchise is marching onto the GameCube under the code name Sarge's War. The evil Tan Army has wiped out Sarge's entire platoon, so it's up to a leaner and meaner Sarge to avenge them. Sarge's character will be buffed up a notch, as will others in the Army Men world, with grittier, enhanced graphics, and the gameplay will feature more dynamic combat action. The enemy A.I. will also be programmed to be extra cunning, so there will be more to this one than just endless blasting. Plus, the game will feature real-time destruction including dismemberment, melting, and holes blown through the chest. Sarge's one-man war will require real-world combat and strategy in order for him to prevail. Dismissed!





BY DR ZOMBIE



- Developed and published by 3DO
- Target release date: Spring 2003

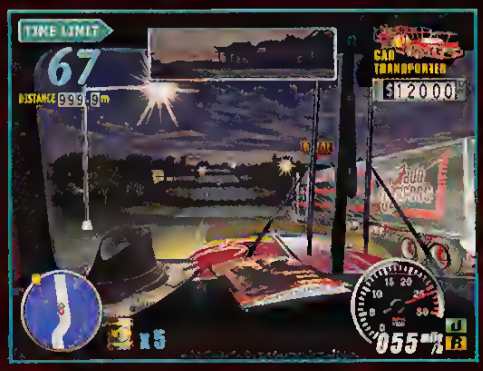
GAMECUBE

FIRST LOOK

The King of Route 66



IN SEGA AND AM2's sequel to 18 Wheeler: American Pro Trucker, players will guzzle caffeine as they race diesel-powered contraptions against the evil Tornado Corporation. The King of Route 66 has improved upon the original trucker sim with a new story and outlaw characters that include a cowboy, a Native American, and—the latest video game cliché—the 1970s guy with an Afro. While the story features two rival trucking companies battling for supremacy, players will also be motivated to earn love from the Queens of Route 66 and become the true King of the Road. The single-player mode promises diverse mission-based levels, and over a dozen mini-games should help keep the replay value high—things that were lacking in 18 Wheeler.







BY SIMON LIMON



- Developed by AM2
- Published by Sega
- Target release date: March

PLAYSTATION 2

FIRST LOOK

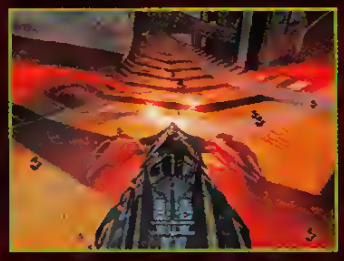
HyperSonic Xtreme

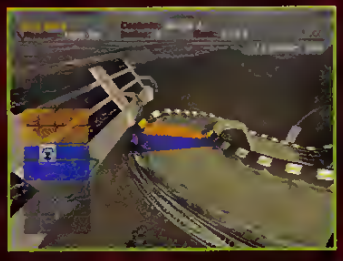






THE SHINING STAR in the preview version of HyperSonic Xtreme was the highly intuitive Build-Your-Own-Track feature—it was like having the ultimate zero gravity electric slot car racing set with an infinite supply of track. The only drawback was that you had to unlock most of the accoutrements, such as turbo strips or power-ups, by playing through the more mundane pre-built levels. In the early build, the various hypersonic hovercrafts handled well, though the button combo for turbo boost was unnecessarily awkward. Thus far, HSX already feels like a well-made—but conspicuously typical—entry into the racing genre, and by the atmosphere and feel of the game, HyperSonic Xtreme could be compared with the venerable WipeOut series.





BY DJ DINOBOT



- Developed by Blade Interactive Studios
- Published by Majesco
- Target release date: First Quarter 2003

PLAYSTATION 2

HANDS-ON

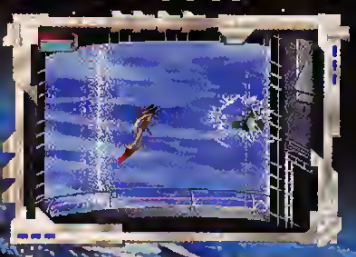
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GAME BOY ADVANCE

EVERYONE

E

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

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SPECIAL
I ♥ heal berries
My parents went to FILGAIA and all I got was this stupid T shirt!
WILD ARMS 3
PlayStation 2
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WILD ARMS 3
Clive has an "explosive" personality
Boomerang hard to reach switches.
Upgrade your arms.
Healberries can only be found or grown.
Gallows is all wet.
Don't forget to reload your weapon
See everything with R1 or L1
Virginia plays her cards right
Virginia
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

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Maximize your video gaming fun! Make the right purchasing choices by knowing exactly what kind of content is inside each game.

The ESRB Ratings Guide

The interactive electronic entertainment industry utilizes a voluntary rating system developed by an independent organization—the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)—so consumers know what to expect before buying a video or PC game. The following is a quick key to the most common ratings; for a complete description, check out the ESRB's Web site at **www.esrb.org** or call **800/771-3772** for more information.

EVERYONE Titles rated **Everyone (E)** have content suitable for persons ages six and older. These titles will appeal to people of many ages and tastes. They may contain minimal violence, comic mischief, or crude language.

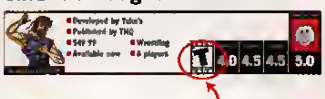
TEEN Games rated **Teen (T)** are suitable for ages 13 and up. These games could have violent content, strong language, and/or suggestive themes.

MATURE Games rated **Mature (M)** are appropriate for older gamers, generally 17 and up. Mature-rated games may contain more intense depictions of violence, stronger language, and, on rare occasions, sexual themes.

RATING PENDING The **Rating Pending (RP)** icon may appear in early reviews of soon-to-be-released products. Look for the actual ESRB rating icon on the game's package, check the ESRB's website, or call its toll-free phone number for updated rating information.

WHERE TO FIND THE ESRB RATING

GamePro understands that parents care about the content of the video games their children play. That's why every review printed in our magazine and posted on our website lists the ESRB rating. Below, we've circled this rating in a sample review box to help readers locate it throughout GamePro.



Note: Previews do not carry an ESRB rating as games are often not rated until they're ready for review and purchase

Die Hard: Vendetta

By Sierra/Fox

MATURE

In an effort to make the game a true sequel to the action movie franchise, Die Hard: Vendetta features lots of shooting and liberal use of the highest tier of adult language Randomly triggered slow-motion death sequences after killing enemies accentuate the impact of the gunplay, earning this game a solid Mature rating.



Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

By Rockstar Games

MATURE

The GTA series returns with a cheeky look back at the 1980s but with no less grit. Just about every player action is amoral—murder, hit-and-run, theft, foul language—you name it, it's in here, along with dirty jokes and racial stereotypes. The game offers a context for the violence, but it's still entirely adult-oriented material, and the pastel shades don't candy-coat the Mature content.



MK: Deadly Alliance

By Midway

MATURE

Mortal Kombat returns with a game true to its blood-splattered roots. The newest edition features almost silly looking glops of plasma, but the amount shown can be controlled, from None to Max (the latter is an awful lot as the arenas are literally painted red by the end of a fight). The game features hand-to-hand martial arts, weapon-based fights, and extremely graphic Fatality moves, where one player kills another in an over-the-top fashion.



Resident Evil 0

By Capcom

MATURE

Just because it's on the system that's best known for Mario and other cute family characters, Resident Evil 0 isn't for younger players. This game has a lot of blood and gore. Most of the plasma that's spilled, though, is that of your adversaries, who consist of monsters and other unreal creatures. Nevertheless, this game—similar to others in the series—would be very scary for younger or more impressionable gamers.



Shinobi

By Sega

MATURE

Shinobi features blood and gore as you play a ninja who dispatches his numerous enemies with a sword, Shurikins, and magic. The harshest stuff comes in the form of brief cinema sequences where enemies literally fall to pieces after they've been sliced by the ninja's blade.

Note. Some box ort may not display final ESRB ratings



Unreal Championship

By Atari

MATURE

Unreal Championship is a game of pure carnage set in a futuristic world—it's basically a game show with guns. The game's gore settings can be easily reduced via a menu, but the default mode has plenty of blood and some graphic dismemberments. Gamers are rewarded for scoring head shots with sniper rifles.

Note: This description also applies to Unreal Tournament 2003 for the PC



ESRB RATINGS FOR ALL GAMES REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE

Die Hard: Vendetta	M
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	M
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance	M
Resident Evil 0	M
Shinobi	M
Unreal Championship	M
Unreal Tournament 2003	M
Contra: Shattered Soldier	T
Fatal Frame	T
Fighter Maker 2	T
Guilty Gear X Advance Edition	T
Haven: Call of the King	T
James Bond 007: NightFire	T
Kakuto Chojin	T
The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	T
Marvel vs. Capcom 2	T
MechAssault	T
Metroid Prime	T
Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II	T
Phantom Crash	T
Ratchet & Clank	T
Rygar: The Legendary Adventure	T
Shenmue II	T
Star Wars: The Clone Wars	T
Star Wars Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast	T
Steel Battalion	T
Suikoden III	T
Superman: The Man of Steel	T
TimeSplitters 2	T
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell	T
WWE SmackOown! Shut Your Mouth	T
Animal Crossing	E
Colin McRae Rally 3	E
Contra Advance: The Alien Wars EX	E
Hamtaro: Ham-Mams Unite!	E
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	E
Kirby: Nightmare in Dreamland	E
The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past	E
Mario Party 4	E
Metroid Fusion	E
Monster Rancher Advance 2	E
NCAA College Basketball 2K3	E
NCAA Final Four 2003	E
NCAA March Madness 2003	E
NHL 2K3	E
Phantasy Star Collection	E
The Revenge of Shinobi	E
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly	E
Star Wars: The New Oroid Army	E
Super Monkey Ball Jr.	E
Virtua Tennis	E

WNW POLL: WHY CLONE WHEN YOU CAN MORPH?

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NOVEMBER 2002

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The Doctor Is In



screenshots from PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system

Are You A Man Or A Mouse?
Morph into six strange creatures from a gorilla to a spider using Dr. Muto's amazing Splizz Gun



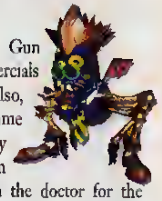
Use a wide variety of gadgets only a mad scientist could invent such as Rocket Boots and the Super Baller

Dr. Muto, the genius mad scientist whose latest experiment accidentally destroyed his home planet, has been the center of a media frenzy with the unveiling of his amazing new "Splizz Gun" technology. Muto's Splizz Gun enables him to mutate and morph with any living organism in order to accomplish tasks no human could achieve alone.

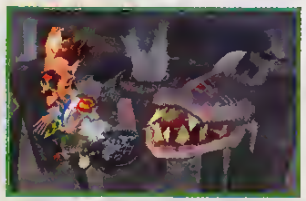


According to Muto, the Splizz Gun's morphing ability will be key in his attempts to rebuild his world. "I simply sample some DNA and 'BANG,' I morph into a mouse, spider, gorilla or any other creature I see fit to become," Muto madly muttered in an exclusive World News Watch interview. "It's not that I am a megalomaniac, I just want to play God."

Muto's technology is receiving so much attention and interest that he will begin selling the Splizz Gun through TV infomercials next month. Also, leading videogame publisher Midway has entered into an exclusive deal with the doctor for the release of an action/adventure videogame based on his bizarre and intriguing life and his Splizz Gun technology. Information about Muto's videogame, simply titled, "Dr. Muto," is revealed on www.drmuto.midway.com, which is a website devoted to Muto's universe of baffling puzzles, mind-bending devices, freakish monstrosities and twisted humor.



Is Dr. Muto the 21st Century's Einstein, or just another madman? Judge for yourself this fall when "Dr. Muto" the videogame releases for next generation videogame platforms.

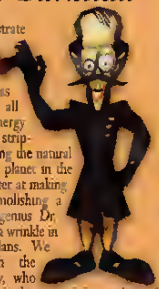


Defend yourself against hurly Rent-a-Cops, vicious 'Charks,' and other henchmen of your rival, Professor Burnitall



PROFILE ON...

Professor Burnitall



As energy magistrate of the Centralis solar system, Professor Gunter Burnitall has outperformed all expectations for energy production by strip-mining and pillaging the natural resources of every planet in the system; he's a master at making energy while demolishing a society. But the genius Dr. Muto has become a wrinkle in his expansion plans. We caught up with the professor recently, who told us, "He's a maniac bent on running my beautiful energy empire. That ridiculous Dr. Muto believes he can build a planet from scrap; of DNA and terra, then steal my energy reserves as the catalysts! PAH!" Burnitall went on to say that Muto is a renegade terrorist and, "My forces will stop at nothing to destroy the horrible little man, no matter WHAT creature he shapes himself into!"

DR. MUTO™

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Comic Mischief
Mild Language
Mild Violence
Suggestive Themes

PlayStation®2

Fall 2002

XBOX

Coming Soon

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

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MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE



Of course, it wouldn't be Mortal Kombat without blood and Fatalities, and Deadly Alliance delivers more than enough gore.

AFTER A LONG absence from the fighting scene, Mortal Kombat returns to the arena with a brand-new look, a revamped play engine, and a host of unlockable secrets. Despite being the first MK developed exclusively for home consoles (let's ignore the ill-fated Special Forces action/adventure spin-off), some of Deadly Alliance's game elements are still very arcade-minded—such as ludicrously difficult bosses and schizophrenic A.I.



PROTIP: Some characters, like Sub-Zero, can impale an opponent with their weapon; once that happens, the struck foe will slowly lose energy.

"FIGHT!"

Going full 3D, Deadly Alliance's play engine is more button-tap-heavy Tekken than two-in-one Street Fighter, and it includes three different fighting styles per character—two martial arts and one weapon-based—that you can switch between on the fly. The triple-style system opens up seemingly endless combos and other chain attacks, but the timing's so tight that it never becomes intuitive; you'll almost have as much success by mashing buttons.

Furthermore, enemy A.I. ranges from passive to unfairly aggressive, and you'll fight matches either schooling the opposition or quickly getting schooled. Plus, bosses—such as Moloch—are an unkind flashback to the unfair tactics of past MK wrecking balls Motaro and Kintaro. They'll shake off almost every incoming attack and quickly retaliate by smacking your sorry ass across the screen.



PROTIP: Forget about using fancy tactics to defeat Moloch; instead, switch to weapon-type stance and then hack away at him.

"FINISH HIM!"

Not that Deadly Alliance lacks any positive trademark MK qualities. Fights are brutal and intense, and gore hounds will be more than satisfied with the game's excessive use of the red palette. This is a very straightforward MK: It lacks past gimmicks (Babalities), focuses more on bloody brawling, and features the right balance of foreboding music and gloomy fighting arenas. Plus, the revival of "Test Your Might" mini-games is a nice nostalgic touch.

Taking full advantage of the at-home gaming experience, Deadly Alliance has a host of time-consuming unlockable secrets. As you progress through the game, you can accumulate Kurrency to purchase concept art, character costumes, fighting arenas, and other goodies—an aspect that provides excellent replay value.



PROTIP: Some arenas have structures and objects that you can destroy.

"FATALITY!"

Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance is a decent next step in the evolution of the bloody fighting franchise. It probably won't convert any non-fans to the series, but long-time Kombatants will kill many happy thumb-busting hours with this one. G



Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance features 12 playable characters at the start, but nine additional Kombatants can also be unlocked.

GRAPHICS 4.0

The characters look more cartoony than threatening, and the excessive blood resembles red goo. The stages feature some awesome environmental visual effects—such as rain, hail, and snow—and the backgrounds sport excellent details.

SOUND 4.0

Although some of the yelps and screams are repetitive, Deadly Alliance features a strong audio track, including stirring music that sets a decent fighting mood.

CONTROL 4.0

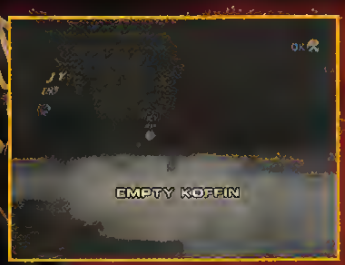
Executing small-string combos is simple; however, things get tricky when carrying out long strings that cross over different fighting styles. And although you can move in 3D, why is there no analog compatibility?

FUN FACTOR 4.0

Deadly Alliance is a decent next step for the popular Mortal Kombat fighting series. Although the game falls victim to some glaring A.I. problems in the one-player modes, its strong two-player contests and hidden features will keep Kombatants finishing each other for hours.



In addition to the fast-finger contest "Test Your Might," Deadly Alliance adds a second mini-game, the memory testing "Test Your Sight."



PROTIP: When you are shopping in the Krypt, don't waste any Kurrency on Koffins JZ, PV, SP, XN, YY, ZA, or ZN; they're all empty.



BY MAJOR MIKE

- Developed and published by Midway
- $49.99
- Fighting
- Available now
- 2 players

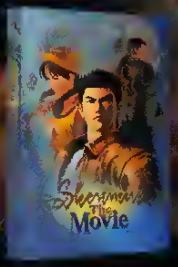
FUN FACTOR 4.0

MATURE M ESRB | GRAPHICS 4.0 | SOUND 4.0 | CONTROL 4.0 | FUN FACTOR 4.0

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the man who knows why and the
may be you or
someone you love.

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TEEN
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Use of Alcohol
Gambling
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PROTIP: The second battle with Icarus is very tough as he leaves his guard down for only a split second.

RYGAR
THE LEGENDARY ADVENTURE



PROTIP: Your Guardian attacks don't home in on enemies, so you have to be sure to attack directly in front of you.

RYGAR: THE LEGENDARY ADVENTURE manages to balance old-school gameplay elements with fancy new ones for a whole new generation to enjoy. The game's length, dialogue, and uneven difficulty are this legend's only blemishes.



PROTIP: The key to the sphinx is to keep moving and to use the charged-up □, □, □, △ attack to inflict massive damage.

Update Complete

The arcades is where Rygar first made its 1986 debut as a side-scrolling action title, but it was on the 8-bit Nintendo Entertainment System that the game truly evolved into a noteworthy adventure. Rygar was addictive but also notorious for having no save function, forcing gamers to leave the system on for days at a time in order to complete the monstrous enterprise.

Rygar: The Legendary Adventure does indeed allow you to save progress to your PS2 memory card, so you can breathe a sigh of relief. What's remained the same are the expansive environments that require extensive exploration. All kinds of visual clues abound to hint at new locales just beyond your reach, at least until you acquire the appropriate abilities. Rygar's levels strike a good balance of indoor puzzle-solving and outdoor investigation.



PROTIP: You can tell by the amount of smoke and the lower volume of the resulting sound effect if an object can be broken.

From the Heavens

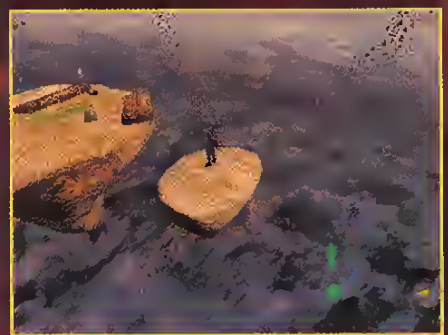
Rygar's production values are topnotch with sharp graphics and luxurious orchestral music. Every boss has cool optical features, and the in-game cut-scenes show off impressive character models. The audio holds up its end of the bargain with background music piped in from either the clouds of Olympus or the bowels of Hades depending on current surroundings. The only sore spots are the stiff voice-acting and the quality of the written dialogue, which mar an otherwise dramatic story.



PROTIP: Catus makes a screeching noise right before he starts tearing up the rocks in front of you.

Relatively Legendary

The challenge the game throws out at you is decidedly inconsistent. The learning curve comes from figuring out the initial "how's" and "why's" of various obstacles, so it becomes easier and easier to figure out things like sliding under objects, upgrading Diskarmor, or opening pressure trigger doors as the game progresses. The number of hours you spend with Rygar are dependant upon how quickly you pick these sorts of things up, which makes for a game that you either walk away from in frustration or beat in just a few days.

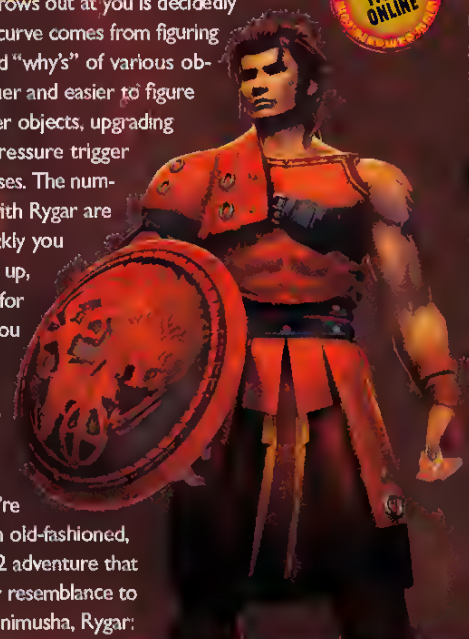


PROTIP: This tricky jump requires you to grab the ledge and climb over the rock, then jump back on at the other end.

Still, if you're looking for an old-fashioned, strenuous PS2 adventure that bears a closer resemblance to Zelda than Onimusha, Rygar: The Legendary Adventure has a unique assortment of riches to offer. G



PROTIP: You have to earn the ability to swing from objects. Once you do, they flash when they are within renge.



GRAPHICS 4.5

The huge levels are colorful and nicely detailed. The frame rate never drops, even with destructible structures and a slew of enemies at your heels. The camera angles are mostly hassle free, but certain preset vantage points make it hard to pull off jumps.

SOUND 4.0

The Moscow International Symphony Orchestra pulls off a wonderful assortment of inspired tunes that give the game a feeling of grand scale, and the sound effects are equally rich. However, the voice-acting and dialogue are ridiculous and lessen the story's impact.

CONTROL 4.5

It takes a while to dial in the controls for the Diskarmor, but it's second nature once you do. A tutorial would have been nice to help learn all the combos and functions of the three weapons.

FUN FACTOR 4.0

You have to figure out many things for yourself to succeed in Rygar, and that will frustrate a large section of gamers. Those who are up to the challenge will find a highly enjoyable adventure. A longer and more balanced quest would have done much to elevate the overall enjoyment of Rygar's exploits.



BY TOKYO DRIFTER

- Developed and published by Tecmo
- $49.99
- Available now
- Action/adventure
- 1 player

T TEEN

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.5	4.0	4.5	4.0

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January '03



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Sports Pages	All / Some / None	1	2	3	4	5
Role-Player's Realm	All / Some / None	1	2	3	4	5
ProStrategy (Shinobi)	All / Some / None	1	2	3	4	5
ProStrategy (Ratchet & Clank)	All / Some / None	1	2	3	4	5
ProStrategy (Animal Crossing)	All / Some / None	1	2	3	4	5
Code Vault	All / Some / None	1	2	3	4	5

2. How would you rate the new Loading... section?

☐ Favorably ☐ Unfavorably ☐ I liked it the old way

How would you rate the new ProReview format?

☐ Favorably ☐ Unfavorably ☐ I liked it the old way

3. What game system do you plan to buy in the next 12 months? (Pick only one.)

☐ Game Boy Advance ☐ Macintosh ☐ PlayStation 2
☐ Game Boy Color ☐ Nintendo 64 ☐ PS one
☐ GameCube ☐ PC/Windows ☐ Xbox

4. Please indicate which of the following publications you purchase or read at least six times per year:

☐ *Computer Gaming World*
☐ *Electronic Gaming Monthly (EGM)*
☐ *ESPN Magazine*
☐ *Game Informer*
☐ *Game Now*
☐ *GamePro*
☐ *Maxim*
☐ *Nintendo Power*
☐ *Official PlayStation Magazine (OPM)*
☐ *Official Xbox Magazine*
☐ *PC Gamer*
☐ *PSE2*
☐ *PSM*
☐ *Sports Illustrated*
☐ *Tips & Tricks*

5. Would you like to see expanded editorial coverage on the following:

Anime	Yes	No
Arcade Games	Yes	No
Cell Phone Games	Yes	No
Consumer Electronics (DVD, MP3, etc.)	Yes	No
DVD Movies	Yes	No
Game Developers	Yes	No
Game Peripherals	Yes	No
Handheld Games	Yes	No
Japanese Games	Yes	No
Online Games	Yes	No
PC Games	Yes	No

6. What games would you like to see ProStrategy Guides for?

7. Pick six games below that you would like to see on a *GamePro* cover:

☐ BMX XXX
☐ Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball
☐ Devil May Cry 2
☐ Doom III
☐ Final Fantasy XI
☐ The Getaway
☐ Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
☐ Gran Turismo 4
☐ Halo 2
☐ The Legend of Zelda
☐ Metal Gear Solid 2 Substance
☐ Metroid Prime
☐ Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance
☐ Ninja Gaiden
☐ Red Dead Revolver
☐ Resident Evil 4
☐ StarCraft: Ghost
☐ Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness
☐ Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell
☐ WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth

8. How did you get this copy of *GamePro*?

☐ Subscribed
☐ Purchased at the newsstand
☐ Other _____

9. Have you ever visited the *GamePro* website (www.gamepro.com)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Do you plan to play online games with the PS2, Xbox, or GameCube?

PS2: ☐ Yes ☐ No Xbox: ☐ Yes ☐ No GameCube: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Tell us what you THINK!

WWE SMACKDOWN! SHUT YOUR MOUTH

THEY'RE GETTING THERE, wrestling fans. While THQ and Yuke's haven't quite got the SmackDown formula perfect yet, Shut Your Mouth represents a definite step forward.

FIND OUT MORE ONLINE



PROTIP: Choose your allies well in Season mode. The people you're nice to will become your friends, and the rest will be out to get you.

SMACKDOWN SEASON

The SmackDown series has always brought a little something extra to the table, and this year's model is no exception. More than 50 of the most realistic-looking wrestlers on a console fight in 17 arenas and 14 backstage areas. Of all of THQ's latest wrestling games, the SmackDown series' controls have always had the best balance of complexity and ease. Even so, SmackDown's claim to fame is as "the game that brought us the Season mode," and that will still be what sticks out in players' minds with Shut Your Mouth.

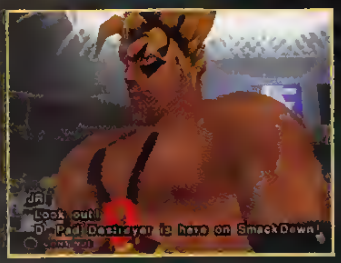
Yes, folks, the Season mode is back and much better than ever. Based on the actual WWE story line, this year's Season is actually satisfying to play, but it suffers from repetition (you have to visit every room every week in order not to miss something) and a certain lack of realism. Even so, it beats the Season modes of every other wrestling game by a mile.



PROTIP: Two-on-one matches are never fair, but they're winnable. Try to keep both opponents from being in the ring at once.

A LITTLE TLC

Yuke's spent its time on Shut Your Mouth tuning the controls and inserting new features to make the matches that much more fun. Reversals and counters are easier and more important than before, and you'll find that you need to master them quickly in order to win consistently. Tag team matches are a lot more enjoyable, too, because you can call your partner in for assistance if you're getting into trouble, and referees react to interfering teammates realistically. There's been a lot more attention paid to small details this time that only help the overall wrestling feel.



Season mode goes a long way toward making you feel personally involved in the WWE.

Of course, not everything's perfect, and the things that need work are some of the same things that needed help in Just Bring It. The timing on the controls feels better but not perfect, and pins sometimes seem random and unfair. Granted, half of "real" wrestling is getting angry at the ref, but in a wrestling game it's nice to have more consistency.

A LITTLE MORE ELECTRIFYING

Overall, the SmackDown series is getting better but in small leaps and crawls. This is the best SmackDown for sure, but it's not as much better as it could have been. 6





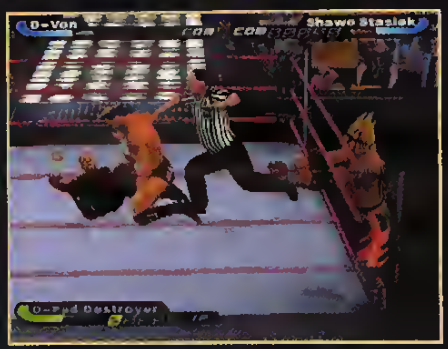
PROTIP: Once you set up a table, grapple the opponent nearby and press ○. You'll place him him on tha table, and you may proceed to layeth down the smack.



PROTIP: Reversals are important to success, especially in matches with weapons. If you reverse a chair shot, you get to keep the chair.



PROTIP: In Tag matches, the A.I. will always run in to break pins. To win in a Teg match, you have to find a way to shut them down.



PROTIP: If you're going to interfere with a match, do it right. If your friend's about to be pinned, tie up the referee by pulling him away or jumping in to distract him.

GRAPHICS 4.0

Fantastic character models and fine animation face off against simple arenas and an overabundance of horrid motion blur. Other than the improved (and excellent) superstars, last year's version looked better.

SOUND 3.5

The wrestlers' theme songs are in, and you'll hear the occasional spoken line from announcers Jim Ross and The King, but the other sound effects (especially the music during the match) are far sub-par.

CONTROL 3.5

It's playable but chaotic and awkward. The controls are better than those of last year's version but not by much. Small additions like easier reversals and calling in your tag team partner go a long way.

FUN FACTOR 4.0

Shut Your Mouth does wrestling right, but it's still only fun if you like wrestling. It has its faults, and they're similar to last year's, but there's no better game for getting the feel of being a WWE superstar.



BY D PAD DESTROYER

- Developed by Yuke's
- Published by THQ
- $49.99
- Available now
- Wrestling
- 6 players

ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
T	4.0	3.5	3.5	4.0

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PlayStation.2 XBOX

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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — VIOLENCE

DREAMWORKS

ACTIVISION

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THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE TWO TOWERS

PETER JACKSON'S MESMERIZING films have stoked the popularity of J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-Earth to feverish heights these days, which means EA faced an imposing task in converting these timeless tales into a video game. Fortunately, The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers pegs the bull's eye with the skill of an elvish archer. It's a one-dimensional game that's no bastion of originality, but its action-packed gameplay captures the essence of the movies with thrilling, impressive flair.



PROTIP: In later levels, enemies aren't dead when they first fall down, so tap R to finish them off.



PROTIP: Atop the wall at Helm's Deep, your top priority is kicking over the orcs' ladders—fight only when you must.

THE SHADOW OF THE PAST

Contrary to its name, the game mixes a highlight-reel flashback to *Fellowship of the Rings* with *Two Towers*' most exciting moments. Playing as either Aragorn, Legolas, or Gimli, you'll travel to Weathertop, Moria, Amon Hen, Fangorn, Rohan, and Helm's Deep, meet lots of menacing orcs and trolls, and kill them all. A pair of awesome secret levels bookends the game, and throughout it all, the frantic, combat-filled gameplay resembles a modern version of Golden Axe, so expect frenzied rounds of swordplay against ceaseless waves of enemies.

Often, games of this sort suffer from repetitive, basic gameplay, but Two Towers mostly escapes that trap with a simple but engaging parrying system and interesting twists in each level that range from startling ambushes to suicide-bomber orcs. However, dying boots you back to the start of the level—an annoying old-school element—and you'll probably beat the game faster than you'd expect. The game's biggest shortcoming, though, is its disappointing lack of multiplayer action—it practically begs to be played in a two-player cooperative mode.



A SHORT CUT TO MUSHROOMS

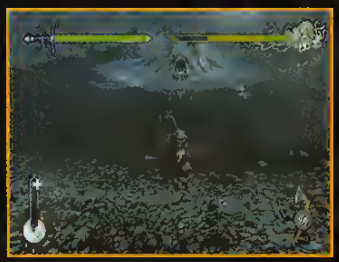
A huge part of Two Towers' appeal is how masterfully it reproduces the movies' look and feel. Film clips blend right into gameplay via remarkably smooth transitions, and the striking graphics and sounds expertly re-create the world of the movies down to the smallest detail. A wealth of slick DVD-style extras, ranging from actor interviews to art clips, serve as ample unlockable rewards for your successes.

A LONG-EXPECTED PARTY

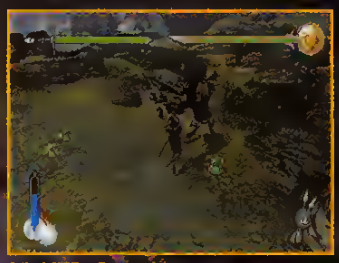
Two Towers isn't perfect, and it's pretty far from groundbreaking, but it's undeniably awesome to delve into such an authentic representation of this universe and whup some orc backside. If you're not a Tolkien fan, shave a full point off the Fun Factor score. But if you are, prepare for this adventure with the same wide-eyed glee that you anticipated the movies with. G



Leveling up your characters unlocks DVD-style extras, such as an interview with Viggo Mortensen, who plays Aragorn and recorded dialogue especially for the game.



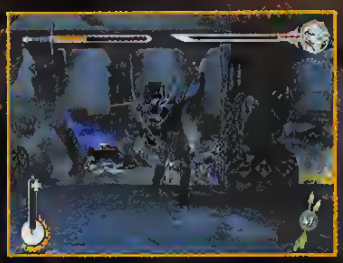
PROTIP: Parry the Watcher in the Water's tentacles until they're stunned, lop one off, retreat, and then fire a range attack into its eye.



PROTIP: Parry the boss riding a wolf of Isengard until the mount rears, then launch as many fierce attacks as possible before retreating.



PROTIP: Deftly timed parrying (tap □) is the most important survival skill to develop and is particularly key when meeting charging enemies.



PROTIP: To defeat the cave troll from atop the ledge, look for spots where you can rapidly fire arrows while a pillar protects you from the chain.

GRAPHICS 4.5

Gorgeous scenery is paired with lively animations and great movie clips. The sense of authenticity is impressive, but some close-up details like the characters' faces—especially Gimli's—look just plain wrong.

SOUND 5.0

The stunning sound connects as forcefully as Medal of Honor's. Between the stirring movie score, dialogue by the actors, and sound effects lifted from the movies' library, you'll feel like you're in the theater.

CONTROL 4.0

You can mash like mad on the fierce and quick attacks, but a little strategy and a combo or two pays off. The camera sometimes abandons you, though, and range attacks and finishing moves are often tricky.

FUN FACTOR 4.5

The Two Towers aims to please fans interested in a shot at playing the movies' blistering battle scenes. It succeeds beautifully at that, even though some significant flaws prevent it from achieving mainstream appeal.



BY AIR HENDRIX

- Developed by Stormfront Studios
- Published by EA Games
- $49.99
- Available now
- Action
- 1 player

ESRB: TEEN

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.5	5.0	4.0	4.5

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REMEMBER THE SWINGS AT THE COUNTY FAIR? QUADRUPLE THAT.



MAGNEBOOTS
WALK UP WALLS. WALK DOWN WALLS. WHATEVER MAKES YOU HAPPY.



GLOVE OF DOOM
IT'S JUST LIKE THE OLD ONE TOOK, ONLY THESE COME WITH ARMS.



DECOY GLOVE
WILL THE REAL RATCHET PLEASE STEP FORWARD?

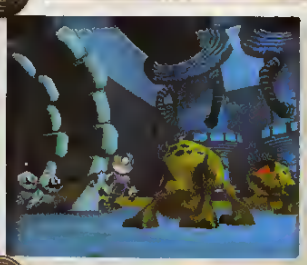
ONE DAY YOU WILL LOOK BACK AT ALL THE DESTRUCTION YOU CAUSED AND SMILE

RIP THE GALAXY A NEW ONE.
YOU DECIDE HOW.

RATCHET & CLANK









PlayStation 2

INSOMNIAC GAMES

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TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Violence

007 NightFire

After a somewhat tepid response to Agent Under Fire, EA is attempting to return the James Bond franchise to its former glory with NightFire, an original adventure that you won't see in the theaters, though its release coincides with MGM's new Bond film *Die Another Day*. NightFire captures the spirit of the films perfectly with its high-adrenaline action and racy costars. Pierce Brosnan even lent his charming visage and smooth voice to this wonderfully filmic effort.



PROTIP: Sniping from under good cover will protect your health.



PROTIP: During the snowmobile escape, take out the gunner first.

THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE JOB

An arsenal of Q-issued gadgets helps you through your missions; however, they tend to be useful only in specifically scripted circumstances. It would have been nice to see more "creative use" situations and interactive environments. Also, the cumbersome item-access issues encountered in previous 007 titles remain intact. And a lack of save points has a deleterious effect on gameplay, forcing you to either keep playing or abandon several missions' worth of progress.

RUN FOR THE MULTITAP

NightFire hearkens back to the golden age of GoldenEye with furious multiplayer action. As you complete single-player missions, you unlock classic Bond characters (Pussy Galore, Jaws, etc.) and new map areas. While there aren't as many modes as in a "pure multiplayer FPS" like Unreal Tournament, you'll be treated to an intense and thoroughly entertaining skirmish.

Anyone who enjoys the James Bond film series will certainly get a thrill out of NightFire with its variety of driving, stealth, and full-on firefights. Even if you don't care for 007's hackneyed hi-jinks, NightFire is a worthy first-person challenge. G



PROTIP: The heat-seeking rocket launcher is your best bet against the guards on the rooftop.



PROTIP: Use this secret underwater passage to get the drop on the bad guys. A well-placed stun grenade will prevent them from killing the geisha.



- Developed by Eurocom
- Published by EA Games
- $49.99
- Available now
- First-person shooter
- 4 players

ESRB: T (Teen) | Graphics 4.5 | Sound 3.5 | Control 4.0 | Fun Factor 4.0

Contra: Shattered Soldier's combination of old-school shooter gameplay and high-end graphics makes it a blast to play and a worthy successor to the legendary franchise.

Hardcore Corps

After two failed attempts on the PlayStation that tried to incorporate free 3D movement, Contra: Shattered Soldier for the PS2 returns the series to its roots as a side-scrolling shooter. The intense action moves both vertically and horizontally, but the focus firmly remains on the 2D plane even though all the characters and objects are comprised of brightly detailed polygons.

Don't get too distracted by the pretty pictures since the game's seven levels are insanely difficult. Playing with two players simultaneously is slightly easier and great fun, plus unlocking all the endings and hidden levels adds replay value.

A hard-driving rock soundtrack is the stand-out on the auditory front. General sound effects like explosions could use a bit more punch, however.



PROTIP: Selecting the appropriate weapon for each enemy is the key to earning a good Hit Rate.

Crazy Patterns

Much like in the early 8- and 16-bit versions, survival depends on memorizing the placement and patterns of enemies. Your arsenal consists of three different guns, which you must switch between depending on the task at hand. It takes lightning-quick reflexes to react correctly, and the responsive controls won't let you down. You can use either the analog stick or digital pad for movement, but you'll want to stick with the latter to get the precision needed to stay alive.

Contra: Shattered Soldier is a must-have for fans of the originals and highly recommended for anyone looking for a tough-as-nails shooter. G



PROTIP: Shoot out the highly accurate guard on top of the barrier before tackling the main gun.



PROTIP: Jump onto the platform stuck to the Fish boss's head to avoid getting knocked around.



Standing on two explosive barrels on top of a jeep is not a good way to get ahead in the world.



- Developed and published by Konami
- $49.99
- Available now
- Shooting
- 2 players

ESRB: T (Teen) | Graphics 4.0 | Sound 4.0 | Control 4.5 | Fun Factor 4.5

JETPACK 3941

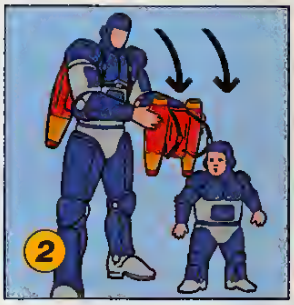
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TRIBES AERIAL ASSAULT



AFFIX OWN JETPACK BEFORE ASSISTING OTHERS





MINEFIELD AVOIDANCE





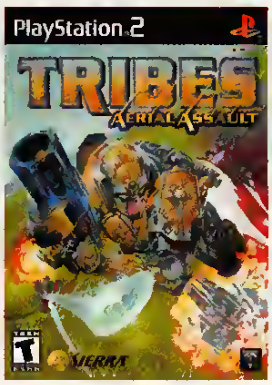
JETPACK CARRY-ONS



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1 READY 2 LEAN 3 BEND 4 KISS ASS GOODBYE







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- CAN'T GET IT UP WITH YOUR JETPACK? JUMP IN A FIGHTER, BOMBER, ARMED TRANSPORT OR GRAVBIKE.

TEEN T Violence CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

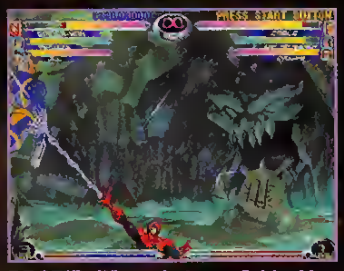
PlayStation.2

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MARVEL VS. CAPCOM 2

CAPCOM PARTIALLY MADE its name on fighting games, and Marvel vs. Capcom 2 is a sturdy reminder that the company produced some of the best genre offerings of the 1990s. Not only does MVC2 have all the trademark attributes of a great Capcom fighter, but it also features splashy graphics and a combo-happy gameplay engine that give it universal appeal.



PROTIP: When playing as Spider-Man, perform a Web Throw with Heavy Punch whenever an opponent tries to jump over you.

"GONNA TAKE YOU FOR A RIDE"

MVC2 has over 50 characters from the Marvel and Capcom franchises, and each fighter is imbued with traditional half- and quarter-circle motions and charge moves. Fortunately, durable controls keep everything fun—not frustrating—and even newbies can master advanced techniques after a few plays. The usual suspects fill the roster (such as Ryu and Wolverine); others (including Jill Valentine and Marrow) make auspicious fighting debuts. The three-on-three battle system—where you can swap teammates at any time during a fight or call them all onscreen at once for the ultimate beat down—keeps the gameplay fresh and exciting. The characters lack balance, though, as you can easily school almost any opposition with the right powerhouse combination (ahem—Iron Man, War Machine, and Cable).



PROTIP: To rack up 9999 points you can later spend in the Secret Factor option, start a game in Training mode before bedtime and let it run. In the morning—or after several hours—you should have amassed the maximum number of points.



PROTIP: As Jill Valentine, when an opponent tries to punch you, motion → ↘ ↓ ↙ ← HP, and then rapidly tap HP for a 10-hit counter.



PROTIP: When your opponent calls a partner into the fray, quickly execute a Super Move so you can damage both characters.

"GOOD WORK, SOLDIER!"

MVC2 has no shortage of 2D sprite splendor—even though the bigger characters are rife with choppy movements. The audio, though, strikes a sour note in the aesthetic package as the jazzy tunes don't belong in this game.

If you're looking for an enjoyable 2D fighter, MVC2 easily fits the bill. Although it's essentially a port of an arcade game that's two years old, this is one matchup that's a pleasure to kill hours with at home.



- Developed and published by Capcom
- $49.99
- Fighting
- Available now
- 2 players

FUN FACTOR

TEEN	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
T	4.0	3.0	4.5	4.0

Fighter Maker 2

FIGHTER MAKER 2 is a challenging game-creation tool that isn't much to look at or listen to, but it's immensely addictive—that is, once you get the hang of it.

Gripe Maker

Fighter Maker 2 builds on its PlayStation predecessor with fancier graphics and upgraded options. While the visuals are much improved over part one's, they're still far below the standards PlayStation 2 users are accustomed to. Characters are composed of very simple shapes, and the textures look bland.

The game's audio also comes up short, especially the primitive sound effects. Hopefully, options to alter background music and sound effects will be top on the list for changes if there's a Fighter Maker 3.

One look at the game's daunting edit menus (shown in the accompanying screens shots) goes a long way toward explaining why no other company has tried to follow Agetec's footsteps in the "Maker" genre. To say the game has a high learning curve is a great understatement.



PROTIP: It's actually possible to make a fighter that controls better than the default ones. Practice!



PROTIP: Watch the shadows below your fighter's foot. They indicate whether he is floating in the air or standing on the ground.



PROTIP: Don't try to create a throw until you've mastered the basics of hit detection.

Happy Maker

All the hours of trial and error eventually pay off since the freedom in creating move animations is immense. Plenty of planning is required in order to end up with something presentable, but the thrill of perfecting your ultimate smackdown flying scissors-head grab is a rich payoff.

The total amount of character features is not quite as abundant as it should be, and the fighting engine is very basic and pedestrian at best. Still, Fighter Maker 2 is great fun and provides endless hours of fruitful creation. It's a perfect starting point for the aspiring software developer in you.



PROTIP: Designing crazy costumes takes careful planning in order to avoid awkward animation breaks.



- Developed by ASCII Entertainment
- Published by Agetec
- $49.99
- Fighting
- Available now
- 2 players

FUN FACTOR

TEEN	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
T	3.0	3.0	3.5	4.0

6 WORLD TITLES, NEVER THE SAME WAVE TWICE.





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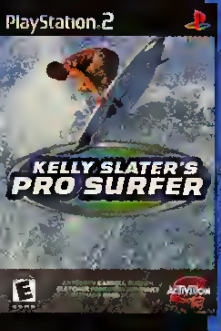
9 modes of play including 2-player PUSH™ mode.

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Surf on waves populated with other surfers.

PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system screenshots shown.

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Lyrics
Mild Violence

PlayStation.2 XBOX GAME BOY ADVANCE TREYARCH

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ACTIVISION O2

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

THE GREATEST THING about J.K. Rowling's ubiquitous magic schoolboy series is its universality—the Harry Potter books (and movies) are meant by and large for children, but have enough wit and wisdom within them that they can be enjoyed by teens and adults as well. The same, however, cannot be said of this Harry Potter game. It's a too-straightforward, by-the-numbers Zelda-style action affair that's strictly for the younger Potter fan interested in playing an interactive storybook.

The graphics, while faithfully capturing Potter faces and places in concept and color, are technically sloppy with some poor textures, frame rate issues, and a heavy case of the jitters—the Xbox and GameCube versions, by contrast, look muuuuch prettier. The controls are none-too-friendly, either, with collision detection issues and a schizophrenic, jumpy camera that seems too often to be toying with you.



PROTIP: Check the bulletin board in the Gryffindor Common Room often—complete the jobs posted there to earn goodies like Wizard cards.

The game, however, does offer a goodly amount of variety in its vaguely mini-Zelda-ish episodes, and the ability to charge your many different magicks and cast them without any spell points to worry about is kinda fun. The sound effects are the game's most solid aspect with talented voice-actors (imitators, not the real thing) spewing scads of Britishisms. Just try not to flip out the hundredth time you hear "Flipendo." GP



PROTIP: If a horde of enemies (e.g. gnomes) doesn't have a "collective health bar," it's probably safe to proceed without dispatching them.



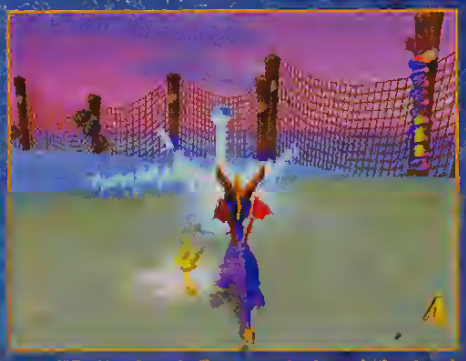
BY STAR DINGO

- Developed and published by EA Games
- $49.99
- Adventure
- Available now
- 1 player

EVERYONE E — GRAPHICS 2.5 | SOUND 4.0 | CONTROL 2.5 | FUN FACTOR 3.0

Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly

SPYRO, THE WORLD'S favorite purple dragon, is back in his first PlayStation 2 action/adventure—and he looks better than ever. In Enter the Dragonfly, Spyro is faced with 25 levels filled with Ripto's minions, who are grabbing up all the dragonflies and wreaking havoc around the normally serene Dragon Realms. To defend himself through this journey, our hero must use offensive breath—not smelly breath but fire, electricity, and ice—to take out enemies and unlock new sections. Bubble breath enables Spyro to safely capture dragonflies, and his pal Sparx helps by snagging valuable gems scattered throughout the world and offering guidance at various points.



PROTIP: Use Spyro's Charge to zip through the timed Challenge levels.

The game's controls can be a fly in the ointment, creating occasionally awkward situations—such as having to hold the × button to glide and then stretch to hit the △ button to land on a hard-to-reach spot. The visuals suffer from momentary camera glitches, which is dangerous if you lose perspective while battling an enemy or making a critical jump. For the most part, though, Spyro is a graphics bonanza with blasts of color and eye-catching nuances, such as rippling water, glowing flames, and shimmering portals. All in all, Enter the Dragonfly is a 3D-platform romp that's sure to generate some buzz. GP



PROTIP: In the Time Attack race, clear the rings first, stay aloft to flame the gliders and lanterns, then run toward the rickshaws.



BY MANNY LAMANCHA

- Developed by Equinoxe/Check Six
- Published by Universal Interactive
- $49.99
- Available now
- Action/adventure
- 1 player

EVERYONE E — GRAPHICS 4.5 | SOUND 4.0 | CONTROL 3.5 | FUN FACTOR 4.5

Haven: Call of the King

REVOLUTIONARY IN THOUGHT, Haven falls a bit short in reality. In this inspiring adventure, you take control of Haven, a young man who's been chosen to free the enslaved population. But to free his people, he must venture to distant lands and experience life-threatening challenges through a variety of genre-themed gameplay levels. Indeed, the game's highlight is that Haven's adventure encompasses a wide variety of styles like platform jumping, rail shooting, and racing. The transition between challenges is surprisingly smooth and works well with the game's story; there are, however, some control difficulties, such as unadjustable button configurations and confusing camera angle setups.



PROTIP: To defeat the Overlord, just stand behind one of the pillars during all of his attacks. When he's near you, jump out and hit him. Continue until he's finished.

Despite the intended scope of the game, Haven's sights and sounds are barely average. Characters are blocky, have little animation movements, and wear boring-colored threads. The environments are also bland and lack detail. The soundtrack thumps with an ever-moving frantic beat that can either stress you out or quickly become annoying to the ears. Plus, the voice-overs are just plain cheesy.

While innovative, Haven doesn't push the PS2 technology to make it a revolutionary game. At least give it a try as a rental to see if you want to be king of Haven. GP



PROTIP: In Quad Challenge, don't use the brakes. If you want to slow down, just let off the gas for a second and then accelerate through a turn.



BY FOUR-EYED DRAGON

- Developed by Traveller's Tales
- Published by Midway
- $49.99
- Available now
- Adventure
- 1 player

TEEN T — GRAPHICS 3.5 | SOUND 3.0 | CONTROL 4.0 | FUN FACTOR 3.5

THE ONLY THING THAT CAN STOP THE RACE IS GOOD WEATHER



WHITEOUT



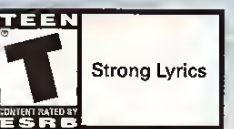








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EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Comic Mischief
Mild Language
Violence

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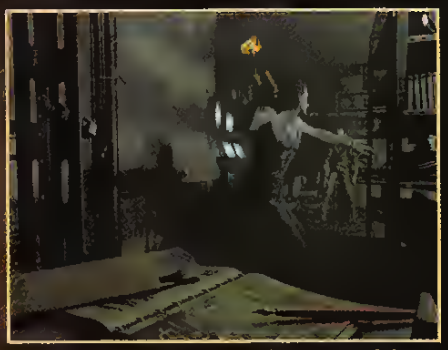
Resident Evil Zero



FIND OUT MORE ONLINE



PROTIP: Before you enter the "gate maze" in the Training Facility Basement, put a powerful weapon in your inventory. Once the puzzle is solved, two Hunters will attack.

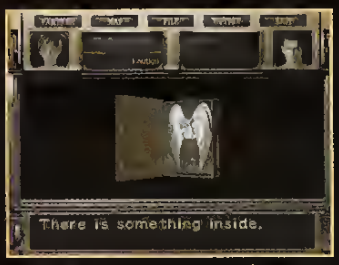


PROTIP: A Molotov Cocktail is the weapon of choice whenever you encounter the stretchy "Leech Man;" other weapons aren't nearly as effective.

As the first "all-new" Resident Evil game in a long time, Ø is hardly a step back for the series: It introduces intriguing new characters, implements unique play techniques, and helps flesh out the ongoing Evil narrative. And although some of Ø's key elements don't add up, the overall sum of the game equals much more than the title number.

WE DON'T NEED ANOTHER...ZERO?

As the title suggests, Resident Evil Ø takes place before the events of the first game and tells the tale of Rebecca Chambers and how she arrived at the Spencer Mansion for the fateful events in the first RE game. A second character, renegade soldier Billy Coen, joins Rebecca for much of the game. As per other Evils, Ø has plenty of monster blasting supplanted by a host of archaic puzzles and quality moments of fright as the action takes place in runaway trains, creepy mansions, and blood-stained laboratories. Ø's monsters make valuable contributions, too, especially a rubbery, seemingly indestructible zombie who appears repeatedly throughout the game.

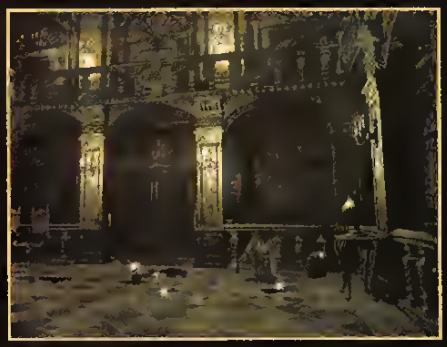


PROTIP: Whenever you pick up a book or another seemingly worthless item, examine it in the Status Menu. You may find a more valuable item hidden inside of it.

SAVED BY ZERO

As innovations go, Ø has some of the best of any game in the series. Foremost is the Partner Zapping System that allows you to control both Rebecca and Billy together, or solo at will. Zapping not only forces you to remain acutely aware of your status and surroundings, but also lends a unique strategy element that's lacking in other Resident Evil games.

The other key new feature, removal of convenient Itemboxes, makes the game take much longer to play out than it should. Playing sans Itemboxes was a novel idea, but in practice their absence makes the game more cumbersome than challenging and you'll spend a great deal of time making repeat long-distance trips to transport key items between locations. The boss battles are also problematic as they frequently arrive without warning and often times—after a thorough schooling—send you back to the last save point.



PROTIP: To save yourself trouble and excessive travel, try to consolidate collected items by dropping them in the same room.



PROTIP: Never, ever, ever ignore a distress call from your partner if you get separated; if he or she dies, it's game over for both characters.

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS

Setbacks aside, Resident Evil Ø is a redoubtable addition to Capcom's long-running survival/horror franchise, and fans of the series will eagerly eat this one up. Even after seven years of sequels, side stories, and remakes, Resident Evil still gives good fright.



PROTIP: Use the Auto-Aiming feature to spot zombies or other monsters that may be playing, um, dead.



This Evil is very pretty, featuring such stunning visuals as this perilous walk atop a speeding train.

GRAPHICS 5.0

Everything in Ø looks gorgeous, from the intricately detailed characters to the eye-popping visual effects. The game's arresting CG cinemas earn high marks as well. Ø also looks better than the first GameCube RE game.

CONTROL 4.0

Commanding and switching between the two characters takes practice, but it becomes second nature once you get past the learning curve. Lack of a custom controller configuration also hurts the overall score.

SOUND 4.5

Ø's eerie music score will send perpetual shivers down your spine, and the excellent sound effects keep the game engrossing every step of the way. Top-notch, poignant voice casting also helps bring the characters to life.

FUN FACTOR 4.5

The Resident Evil series gained popularity by exploiting its effective gameplay formula, and Ø is no exception. Some of the new play elements miss the mark, but overall Ø is a long, rewarding night of fright.



BY MAJOR MIKE

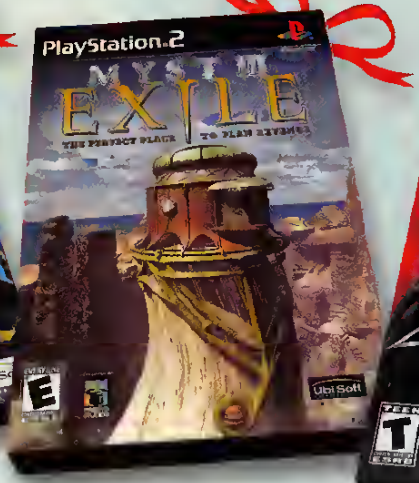
- Developed and published by Capcom
- $49.99
- Available now
- Action/adventure
- 1 player

MATURE 17+	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
M	5.0	4.5	4.0	4.5

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PRODUCTS RANGE FROM EVERYONE TO TEEN
E-T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence
Mild Language

PlayStation.2
CLEAR CHANNEL ENTERTAINMENT

007 NightFire

IT'S HARD TO get excited about another Bond game these days. To the jaded gamer, each new 007 title feels like a direct attempt to profit from Rare's groundbreaking GoldenEye by offering a cheap substitute. While EA Games certainly plans to profit from the James Bond license, it hasn't failed to whip up a surprisingly tasty single-player experience with worthwhile multiplayer action.

FIND OUT MORE ONLINE



PROTIP: Avoid police roadblocks during the driving missions by veering off the road to the right. Hitting a roadblock is an instant game over.



PROTIP: Use your thermal-vision glasses to detect otherwise invisible laser sensors in the stealth missions.

License To Kill a License?

By mixing stealth, sniper, and vehicle-based missions, the single-player game doesn't tie you down to a strictly run-n-gun experience. NightFire never serves up two consecutive play types in a row. For example, players will find themselves sneaking through an elite party hosted by baddies in one level and manning a machine gun atop a snowmobile in the next.

The first-person controls are as smooth as those of any other FPS on the market, and driving the vehicles comes naturally—a true sign of good control. The auto-aim is a bit jumpy when you're trying to move while firing but not to a painful degree. Most importantly, the controls don't inhibit the gameplay early on—which is great when you're trying to adapt to the confident mindset of Agent 007.



PROTIP: Be sure to use your enhanced camera to spot hidden snipers at the start of the nuclear power plant level.



PROTIP: Always reload your weapons before entering a room with possible baddies because when you can't shoot the enemy, the enemy shoots back.

Never Say Never Another Good Bond Game

Detailed player models coupled with the irresistibly catchy musical score push NightFire out of the large pool of average games and into something more memorable. Multiplayer action is as diverse as single-player with a wide range of game modes, plenty of maps, and 'bots. If you're considering purchasing NightFire, make sure you have at least three friends or you'll miss out on the lasting appeal of a Bond game that can stand up against its N64 predecessor. G



BY SIMON LIMON

- Developed by Eurocom
- Published by EA Games
- $49.99
- Available now
- First-person shooter
- 4 players

FUN FACTOR

TEEN	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
T	3.5	4.0	4.5	4.0

STAR WARS THE CLONE WARS

ALTHOUGH THE JURY'S still out on the movie *Star Wars Episode II*, there's no denying the excitement and appeal of living out the *Star Wars* adventure yourself. LucasArts takes its tried and true formula of episodic adventure gaming à la Rogue Leader and gives it a strong *Episode II* spin in Star Wars: The Clone Wars for the GameCube.



PROTIP: On approach, initiate a counter-clockwise sweep of all Separatist ships to prevent their takeoff.



PROTIP: Save rockets for tight clusters of oncoming enemies as auto-targeting will automatically aim for the toughest opponent.

IN-YOUR-MACE ACTION

This game picks up where the movie ends as you walk in various Jedi shoes in 16 combat missions that place you behind the controls of seven different crafts, such as Republic fighter tanks, speederbikes, and Republic gunships. LucasArts finally answers its fans' pleas for multiplayer action by providing a variety of co-op and head-to-head modes that offer something for everyone.

Sharp graphics bring interstellar environments to vivid life as you pilot authentic-looking vehicles throughout them. The amount of onscreen action and opponents can be daunting yet exhilarating at the same time, and it's possible to get disoriented amidst the mass onscreen chaos. Solid controls enable you to master each vehicle, although some respond more tightly than others, like the Republic tanks that seem to just glide across bumpy desert terrain. Decent voice-acting, rich surround sound effects, and the world-class John Williams *Star Wars* scores cap an authentic *Star Wars* experience.



PROTIP: For maximum efficiency, plot attack runs with the location of your power-ups in mind at all times.



PROTIP: In the arena, rush to a Republic gunship ASAP. Don't waste time or health on annoying Genosians.

CONTINUE, THE CLONE WARS HAS

Star Wars: The Clone Wars doesn't reinvent the genre of driving combat, but its variety of vehicles and levels makes this a solid gaming value. This game delivers a little of everything in creating a "forceful" video gaming experience. G



BY DR. ZOMBIE

- Developed by Pandemic
- Published by LucasArts
- $49.99
- Available now
- Vehicle combat
- 2 players

FUN FACTOR

TEEN	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
T	4.0	4.5	4.0	4.0

FORGOTTEN REALMS

Baldur's Gate™ Dark Alliance™

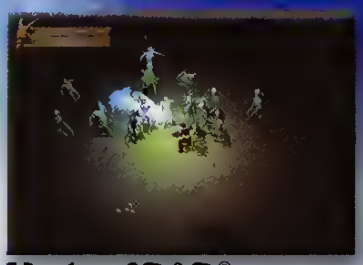
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Explosive spell effects



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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Violence
Use of Alcohol

DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE SOFTWARE

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developed by snowblind studios

Interplay

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Mario Party 4

IT'S HARD TO argue with the Mario Party formula: Four friends, tons of short action contests, and the basic appeal of a board game, all wrapped up into a neat, family-friendly digital package. No surprise, then, that Nintendo sticks close to the roots with the series' debut on the GameCube.

The most important addition to Mario Party 4 isn't the mini/mega mushroom power-ups (which offer more control over how you move around the board)—it's the optional practice sessions before each of the title's 50 all-new mini-games. Now players don't have to learn by losing! The mini-games themselves are complemented by cheery graphics, bouncy music, and amusing sounds that supply whimsy with a capital "whuh" (though it's worth noting that the GameCube gets to play with things like water and translucency effects). Control is as sharp as ever, so bring a reliable controller to the Party because it will get a serious workout.

Mario Party 4 is not a major update to the franchise by any means, and the lackluster, when-is-it-my-turn single-player story mode can't hold a candle to the multiplayer madness for which the game was designed. But if you've got the warm bodies, Mario Party 4 will bring the great gameplay.



PROTIP: In Pair-o-Sailing, make sure the airborne player's body is lined up with the coins—not their parachute.



PROTIP: It's always better to stop and grab when the wind blows in Cliffhangers—just to be safe. Slow and steady wins this race.



BY DAN ELEKTRO

- Developed by Hudson Soft
- Published by Nintendo
- $49.99
- Available now
- Action/board game
- 4 players

EVERYONE E — GRAPHICS 4.5 | SOUND 4.0 | CONTROL 4.5 | FUN FACTOR 4.5

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

YOUNG POTTER FANS will have a fine time romping around Harry's world in EA's second year at Hogwarts, but everyone else will yawn at an adventure game that lacks the slightest wheeze of innovation.

Chamber's gameplay borrows heavily from the Zelda school of adventuring, but the fun comes from filling Harry's shoes—this game would be lifeless without the license. But if you scoff at such Muggle-like concerns, you'll enjoy seeing everything from Diagon Alley to the Whomping Willow drawn in such rich, lustrous colors and accompanied by such cheery, perky audio. The gorgeous GameCube version delivers the best graphical pop in the slew of Chamber of Secrets games, and the screen's always loaded with bright magical effects or other eye-catching moments.

The lousy camera is a handful and a half, though, as it rarely orients itself properly and often abandons the player outright. That flaw aside, the game is very easy to play and offers lots of help, which makes perfect sense given its appeal to a young audience. Overall, the GameCube version ranks as the best of this year's class, and as long as your Harry Potter fandom never falters, you'll see the magic in exploring this Chamber of Secrets.



PROTIP: To get a good grade in the flying lesson, focus on speed. If you miss a ring, just keep jamming ahead on your broomstick.



PROTIP: Free Ron from the Whomping Willow by hitting the green glow on the Willow's head with Flipendo and then using the resulting spasm to Flipendo the Willow's eye.



BY AIR HENDRIX

- Developed by Eurocom
- Published by EA Games
- $49.99
- Available now
- Adventure
- 1 player

EVERYONE E — GRAPHICS 4.5 | SOUND 3.5 | CONTROL 3.0 | FUN FACTOR 3.5

Die Hard: Vendetta

JOHN MCCLANE IS back and, er, older than ever in Die Hard: Vendetta, a first-person shooter boasting an original story line that pits you against the mutant progeny of Hans Gruber, years after the third film. Though Vendetta stays close to its source material by offering players excessive profanity and an endless supply of geeks to plug, its bargain-basement visuals, vapid enemy A.I., and flaccid controls ensure that the game could stand accused of lameness in a court of law.

Vendetta gives you two control schemes to choose from. Though the over-forgiving auto-aiming feature—which automatically targets stationary enemies for you—makes the game ridiculously easy, it's preferable than the masochistic manual-aim configuration, in which getting a bead on enemies from a few yards is tough enough to make you yank hair.

An effort is made to mix things up by giving you the option, if not outright forcing you, to use stealth tactics in sticky situations, but the game really could've done without the molar-grindingly annoying jumping puzzles. Besides actor Reginald VelJohnson, the voice-acting is the pits, and the blocky, sub-par graphics are most weak even without the hammered frame rate. The Die Hard license deserved something with more flair; unfortunately, Vendetta is the latest victim of the dreaded movie-based game curse.



PROTIP: Enemies will kill hostages if you come in with guns blazing. Instead, sneak up and grab one of them—his buddies will then throw down their guns, allowing you to plug 'em all.



PROTIP: Use a proximity mine to blow open the gate outside the Century City Police Department.



BY PONG SIFU

- Developed by Bits Studios
- Published by Sierra/Fox
- $49.99
- Available now
- First-person shooter
- 1 player

MATURE M — GRAPHICS 1.5 | SOUND 2.5 | CONTROL 2.0 | FUN FACTOR 2.0

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EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Lyrics

PlayStation 2

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– PSM, OCTOBER '02

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IMP

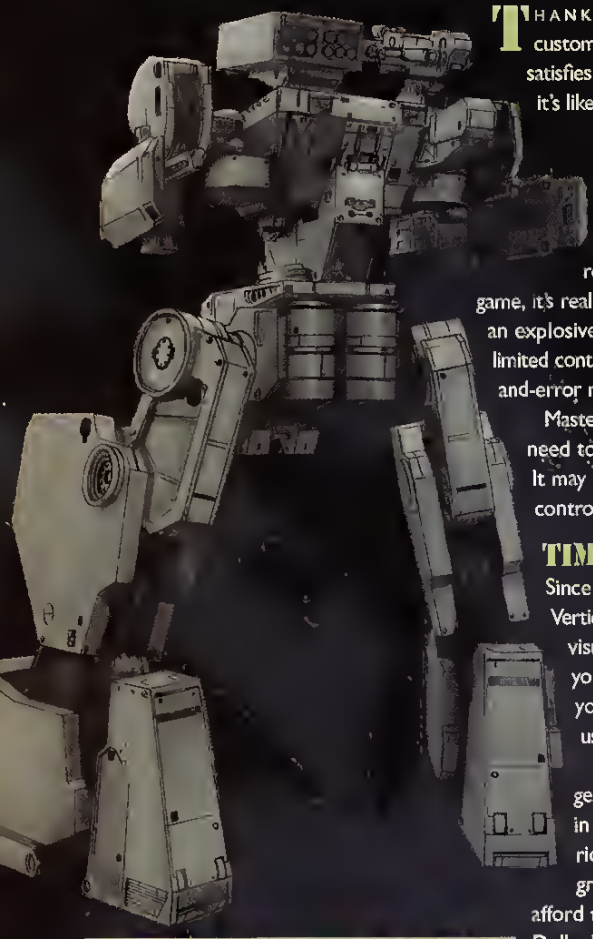
XBOX

PlayStation.2

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STEEL BATTALION



THANKS TO TOPNOTCH presentation and a custom-built controller, Steel Battalion more than satisfies anyone who has ever wanted to feel what it's like to pilot a building-tall mech o' destruction.

METAL PLATOON

Steel Battalion's 23 missions will be familiar to anyone who has played squad-based military games—only here you have giant robots. While there are many simulation aspects to the game, it's really a thinking man's first-person shooter that plays out like an explosive game of chess—a very, very hard game of chess with limited continues. In fact, a tutorial mode is sorely needed as the trial-and-error method will eat away weeks at a time.

Mastering the controls is part of the learning curve, and you'll need to use more buttons the deeper you get into the game. It may be hard to find a place to put the massive 40-button controller, but it works well just resting on your lap.

TIME TO UPGRADE

Since you view the action from the video monitor of your Vertical Tank, the graphics have a realistic, grainy quality. Every visual trick in the Xbox is used to fool you into thinking you're actually in the pilot's seat. The only downside is that your vision's restricted by the HUD, making it hard to play using smaller TV sets.

Steel Battalion's audio rewards owners of home-theater gear with awesome surround sound that places you firmly in the heat of battle. You'll hear rotors creaking, bullets ricocheting off your hull, and even dirt falling back to the ground after it's been kicked up by artillery fire. If you can afford this game, there's no reason you shouldn't have a full Dolby 5.1 setup. This is highly recommended since much of the audio detail is lost if you're listening through TV speakers.

THE $200+ QUESTION

The high level of difficulty means you get plenty of play value, but in a game like this, it's the quality of those hours that outshines the quantity. The bottom line is that Steel Battalion offers a truly unique experience not available anywhere else. The controller, the visuals, and the audio all work in seamless unison to raise the hairs on your back and form beads of sweat on your brow.



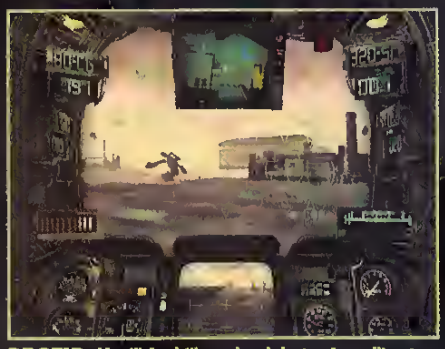
PROTIP: Turn on the Forecast Shooting System to track moving targets.



PROTIP: Buildings make very effective cover and can force enemies into depleting their ammo.



PROTIP: In Mission 3, move across the bridge at top speed or you'll sink into the water when it blows.



PROTIP: You'll feel like a heel, but using allies to draw fire away from you is an extremely effective tactic. Just don't overdo it.

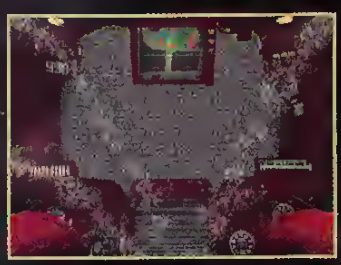
FIND OUT MORE ONLINE



PROTIP: Tackle the battleship head-on only if you've exhausted nearby cover and have plenty of chaff.



PROTIP: When faced with a barrage of missiles, shooting out a chaff works better than sidestepping.



PROTIP: Make sure you eject before your VT blows up, or you'll have to create a new pilot from scratch.

GRAPHICS	4.5

The visuals have a realistically gritty style that looks fantastic. Smart use of particle and video effects that only the Xbox is capable of.

SOUND	5.0

The audio is so stellar on surround-sound speakers that your neighbors may call the cops thinking the U.S. has been invaded.

CONTROL	4.5

You feel in total control of the Vertical Tank once you know what every button and pedal does.

FUN FACTOR	4.5

An experience unrivaled on the home front. Scores of challenging missions that take a long time to master keep you coming back for more.



BY TOKYO DRIFTER

- Developed and published by Capcom
- $199.99
- Action
- Available now
- 1 player

TEEN

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.5	5.0	4.5	4.5

STAR WARS® JEDI KNIGHT® II: JEDI OUTCAST™



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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Violence

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MORTAL KOMBAT
DEADLY ALLIANCE

After Mortal Kombat 4, some disappointed gamers swore they'd never visit Outworld again. Now, thanks to a totally revamped fighting engine, stunning visuals, and (gasp!) martial arts authenticity, Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance could be the game to win its fanbase back.



PROTIP: The number of Koins you earn for a match is directly related to the difficulty setting. Crank it to bank it!



PROTIP: Sonya's Kiss of Death (tap ↓, ←, ×) is a great combo starter as it stuns opponents for a few seconds.

Deadly Pair

In the current incarnation of MK, baddies Shang Tsung and Quan Chi have formed the titular team-up, and together they managed to kill Shao Khan *and* Liu Kang. Several other series veterans return to battle the devious duo—including Scorpion, Sub-Zero, Kung Lao, Kano, and Kitana—but the deceased left some room on the 21-fighter roster for newbies like blind badass Kenshi and Sub-Zero's female protégé, Frost.

Each character fights in three disciplines, which the player can swap between at will. Styles including hapkido, jeet kune do, kenpo, and tai chi are joined by weapon-based attacks as well as character-specific moves like Scorpion's trademark spear. Skilled players will soon learn to string together assaults that span multiple disciplines for stunning, technically challenging combos. Konquest mode teaches each fighter's moves and rewards progress with Koins, which unlock over 600 goodies like secret characters, new outfits, and making-of bonus material. Some of it's lame, some of it's great, but it's fun building up to something bigger than just the next fight.



PROTIP: Wanna make kash kwick? Reduce the match time to 20 in Arcade mode and focus on getting an early lead in the match.



PROTIP: To unlock Kitana, buy koffin KI for 2931 Sapphire Koins. Her alternate outfit is at BQ for 1327 Gold Koins.

Kombat Con Queso

The graphical overhaul is flat-out gorgeous. Not only are the expansive fighting arenas filled with details and environmental effects, but the fluid, detailed character animation is simply breathtaking. And yes, the blood is still here, splattering like so many gloopy blobs of ketchup. The honed controls offer satisfaction for technicians and mashers alike (maybe favoring mashers too much), but the game relies very heavily on air-juggle combos, and the A.I. is still sufficiently better than humans (that is to say, cheesy); you'll want to hurl controllers across the room often.



The "Test Your Might" mini-game returns, joined by a shell-game-inspired cousin, "Test Your Sight."

Life After Death

Even with its A.I. problems, Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance will restore gamers' faith in the pioneering fight series with its amped-up gameplay and delicious visuals—no small feat. The result is a highly enjoyable, very playable 10th anniversary rebirth for the series.



PROTIP: To unlock Scorpion's cool flaming-skull alternate outfit, purchase the Koffin labeled UH for 1660 Jade Koins in The Krypt.



PROTIP: Projectiles like Shang Tsung's Fire and Scorpion's Spear leave them vulnerable to attack if they miss. Use them at a distance.

GRAPHICS	4.5

The big changes, like the stellar character animation, are obvious, but the little things impress you over time: Characters bruise, cut, and bleed as the matches wear on, and it's cool to smash through ice pillars and stone statues in the middle of a fight.

SOUND	4.0

The atmospheric music is wonderfully creepy, but after hearing the same "Hai!" and "Aaaugh!" effects over and over and over, you'll wonder why more vocal snippets weren't recorded.

CONTROL	4.0

Whether you like to plan out precise combinations or just flail on the buttons randomly, MKDA delivers responsive controls. Hitting the Black button for throws, taunts, and reversals isn't optimal, but it'll do.

FUN FACTOR	4.0

After five arcade outings, the MK series needed some time off to renew itself. It was time well spent, and despite some juggle-happy A.I. problems, fighting fans can welcome the rejuvenated Mortal Kombat back with open fists.

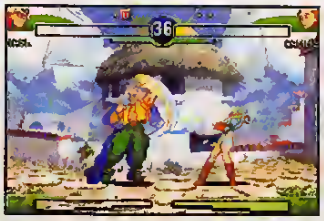
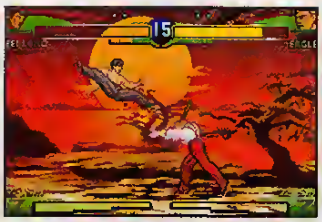


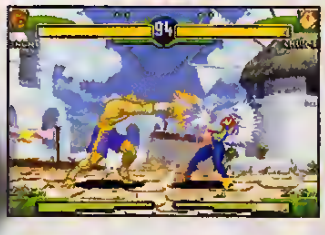
BY DAN ELEKTRO

- Developed and published by Midway
- $49.99
- Fighting
- Available now
- 2 players

MATURE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
M	4.5	4.0	4.0	4.0






"STREET FIGHTER PERFECTION"











Street Fighter® Alpha 3 scores a triple K.O.! It's the most accurate translation of an arcade game to grace the circuits of the Game Boy® Advance video game system... featuring all new enhanced modes of play – including 3 fighting styles for every character. Maybe nobody's perfect. But as of today, at least one fighting game is.

CAPCOM
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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

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Unreal Championship

AND SO IT has come to pass that Xbox users with broadband and a subscription to Xbox Live shall learn what their PC-hevin' friends have known for years: Fragging strangers named g0ku_sephIr0th_87 is fuuuuun.

Yeah, but Is It Halo?

Unreal Championship is essentially the Xbox-tuned version of the PC game Unreal Tournament 2003 with all the same game modes (Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch, Double Domination, Capture the Flag, and the "football with guns" cult favorite Bombing Run), Mutator options, and weapons as in its PC counterpart. This is hyperchaotic multiplayer ammo-spewing at its most manic.

Unreal Championship is designed with multiplayer foremost in mind, meaning there's a wide selection of thoughtfully designed arenas and stages tailor-made for their specific game types. UC's deathmatch modes are a bit less tactical and a lot more fragtical than Halo's. The weapons are messier than Master Chief's, but the selection is more well balanced—there isn't really a loser among them, nor is there a clear superweapon you'll constantly want to sling at your side.

Unfortunately, the story-free single-player mode seems tacked on. Just take a series of multiplayer matches, remove "real people" from the equation, and there ya go—instant afterthought.



How Do You Pronounce "R0xx0rz"?

The Xbox Live interface works simply, much like it does on a PC—just log into the network and search for games. You can hop into any number of existing "open" matches or hook up with some friends in a closed arena. New maps are available for download in the Content section, and individual player stats and rankings are immortalized for all to see in the grand Xbox Live archives.

For the Xbox non-Live, the game also supports system link with up to four Xboxes and four players per machine, although the frame rate (already prone to dropping even in single-player mode) takes an additional hit, and some key information (namely, who fragged who) gets banished from the screen.

w00t

Unreal Championship easily ranks among the best of the Xbox Live launch titles, though as you play you can't help thinking about how someday Master Chief will go Live. 'Til that magic day arrives: Frag away.



In System Link mode, the screen dynamically splits and un-splits as players freely join and quit, creating much softness.

FIND OUT MORE ONLINE



While it's great with other people, Bombing Run generates anti-fun when you're playing with bots.



PROTIP: Tap ↓, ↓, ↓ when your Adrenaline meter hits 100 to trigger Regeneration—both your shields and health will begin to refill.



PROTIP: Stick with your teammates when you reach the upper rungs of the single-player Team Deathmatch—you're much stronger as a team.



PROTIP: Fire off a round of the Shock Rifle's Alt-Fire weapon, then shoot the energy ball with the Primary Fire to trigger a devastating explosion.



PROTIP: Head-shot! Aim for your enemy's melon when you've got the Lightning Gun zoomed in for a satisfy-ing one-hitter.



PROTIP: Shoot the Link Gun's Alt-Fire at another teammate armed with the Link Gun; your teammate's attacks will now heal them, while you're "linked."

GRAPHICS 4.0

The arenas are super-pretty, the weapons are dazzling, and the game exudes Stargate-In-Las-Vegas style; unfortunately, the game struggles to keep up the frame rate, even in single-player mode, so you can't really see the cool "rag doll" death animations.

SOUND 4.0

The weapons, explosions, and chaotic sound effects (i.e. the important stuff) all sound great, especially with surround sound...but the extreme-goth-rock music is lame, and the pre-designed taunts get old fast. Luckily, you can spew your own vitriol via the Xbox Live mic.

CONTROL 4.5

Tight, clean, and instantly accessible to anyone who's played an Xbox FPS; there's also an easy, robust PC-style multiplayer interface. It's difficult to differentiate weapons, though, and sniping with the Lightning Gun isn't nearly as tight or fun as sniping in Halo.

FUN FACTOR 4.0

Stupid, brainless fun for the frag-inclined masses, but—no—it's not Halo Live. Subtract a point if you don't have Xbox Live or a LAN since the single-player game is essentially a "season" of the multiplayer games without the benefit of real people.



BY STAR DINGO

- Developed by Digital Extremes
- Published by Infogrames
- $49.99
- Available now
- Shooting
- 16 players

MATURE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
M	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.0



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EVERYONE

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Shenmue II

ASTUTE GAMEPRO READERS may have noticed ads for Shenmue II last year when it was originally slated to be released for the Dreamcast. Almost a year later, Ryo Hazuki finally re-emerges on the Xbox, getting some spit and polish to boot.

FIND OUT MORE ONLINE

Born Again

Shenmue II's creator, Yu Suzuki, describes it as a new genre that merges cinematic storytelling with an unusual variety of gameplay (mostly adventure, fighting, and RPG elements) for an absorbing tale of loss and revenge. You'll explore new areas, perform jobs to earn money, and fight using either the QT battle system or straight-up beat-em-up controls. QT battles require Simon Says–like button pressing—a nice change of pace from the regular fighting in the game, which plays exactly like another excellent Yu Suzuki title, Virtua Fighter. However, navigating around town is not quite as fluid as the combat; it's the game's most glaring flaw.

Shenmue: The Game: The Movie

The real meat of the game is the dramatic story of Ryo investigating the death of his father. That trail has led from his home in Japan to Hong Kong, where this installment begins. You can watch all that transpired in the previous game with Shenmue: The Movie, a very nice, 90-minute DVD that adds great value to the package.

While the overall narrative is very strong, the voice talent falters at times, pulling you out of the moment. The 5.1 Dolby audio is a nice upgrade, although the voices sound like they are compressed and not as sharp as the crisp background music.

Bill Gates Is Happy

The graphics have not been greatly revamped from their Dreamcast source, but they were groundbreaking a year ago and still stand out among the Xbox elite. Every nuance of town life seems to have been captured accurately, right down to behavior patterns of the populace.

Shenmue II is an extremely satisfying yarn that breaks into new visual and gameplay territory. The Xbox needed a game like this.



PROTIP: Choose Shenmue mode over Cinema mode so you can skip through dead-end conversations.



PROTIP: Twirling kicks work best in trapping this speedy dude; they also open him up for some extra hits.



PROTIP: When you're really lost, friendly folks will let you follow them to the destination you seek.



PROTIP: Wait until the game camera zooms in and the red leaf leaves a motion trail before attempting to pluck it out of the air.



Even stores that have nothing to do with the story, like this trinket shop, are elaborately decorated.



PROTIP: The confrontation with Ren in the warehouse happens very quickly. Tap Left, Right, and then the A button.



PROTIP: Pressing the White button changes the color of the video filter for that archived footage look.

GRAPHICS	4.5
SOUND	4.5
CONTROL	4.0
FUN FACTOR	4.5

GRAPHICS 4.5

City streets abound with intense detail, and even relatively minor indoor locations are painstakingly fleshed out. The diverse medley of characters looks great although slightly boxy. They could have eased up on the motion blur effects, too.

SOUND 4.5

The voice-acting is competent but really needs more emotional charge to drive home the story. The cello-heavy background music sets an appropriate atmosphere, and it's all delivered in Dolby Digital 5.1.

CONTROL 4.0

Greater customization of the controller is sorely needed, and moving Ryo around town is awkward, even with the analog sticks. However, the fighting controls are absolutely fantastic and have great depth.

FUN FACTOR 4.5

Shenmue II is a unique gameplay hybrid with a lengthy and absorbing story. The mixture of play styles may rub some people the wrong way, but most will find the vast scope of this venture too alluring to resist.



- Developed by AM2
- Published by Sega
- $49.99
- Available now
- Adventure/RPG
- 1 player

ESRB T TEEN

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.5	4.5	4.0	4.5

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PlayStation.2

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with traps, puzzles and secrets.

DRAGON'S LAIR 3D

Return to the Lair

TEEN T Mild Violence
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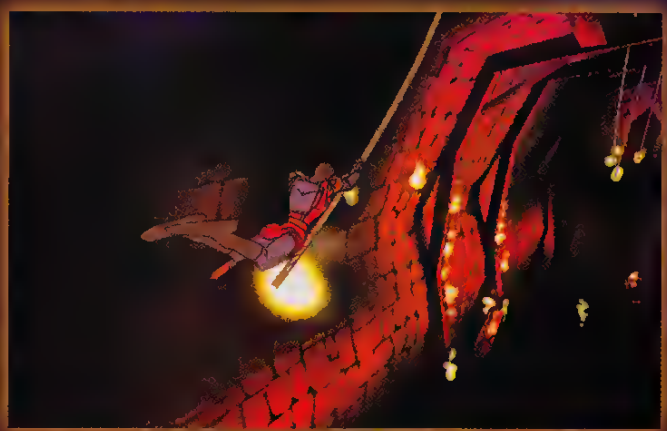
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STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT II: JEDI OUTCAST

EVEN IF YOU'RE not a fan of the original *Star Wars* trilogy, you owe it to yourself to kick down the coin for Star Wars Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast, a devastator of a game that captures the essence of the films unlike any other. Vicarious Visions' port of the PC epic is indeed a heroic accomplishment, and with retina-bending graphics, unreal sound design, and a slew of multiplayer modes, it is arguably the best *Star Wars* game ever made.



PROTIP: Week-minded Imperial officers can be mind-tricked into opening doors for you.

Jedi Sniper

As New Republic mercenary Kyle Katarn, you'll learn the ways of the Force when you run afoul of a Sith lord named Desaan who has aligned himself with the swelling remnants of the Galactic Empire. The first quarter of Outcast is a straight-up FPS and as such, it owns. Sure, a controller will never match the precision of a mouse and keyboard, but Outcast compensates with a forgiving auto-aim feature and adjustable thumbstick sensitivity, resulting in the most elegant console FPS controls since Halo. And just when the action feels like it's getting tired, you undergo Force tutelage under Luke Skywalker and the game opens up into a whole new level.



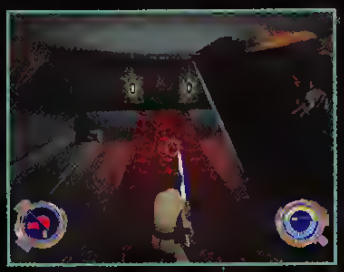
Your Force powers grow more powerful es you progress, end eventuelly you too will know the bliss of hearing e stormtrooper's vertebree pop while you're choking the miserable life out of him.

I'm Just a Guy with a Lightsaber And a Few Questions

After you carve up your first few Greedos with the lightsaber and Force-push them to their screaming dooms off Nar Shadaa rooftops, you'll never want to use a gun again. Not only do your powers grow more powerful as you progress, but you also learn new abilities like the Jedi mind trick—an excellent reward system that will keep you hooked until the very end. By the time you get to Bespin, you'll be flipping over people's heads at super-speed, throwing your saber through imperial officers before they can lift their pistols, and strangling storm troopers from several yards away. With your lightsaber and an arsenal of weapons and Force abilities, the number of ways you can grind the evil mothers of the universe to dust is inspiring.



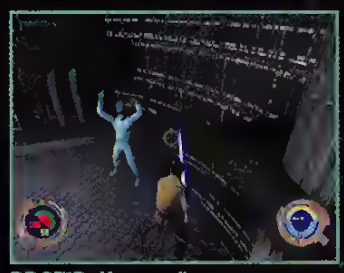
PROTIP: Against multiple Reborn Jedi, using the Force on one will leave you vulnereble to the other. Using Force speed during these duels will give you e bit of en equelizer.



With plush interior decor, red velvet carpeting, end well-stocked "refreshments," Lando's Ship, the Lady Luck, is the smoothest ride in the gelaxy. Allow Lando to take you there....

Ultimate Jedi Punisher

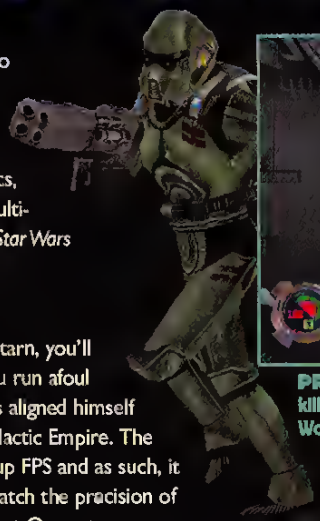
No game is perfect, and some of Outcast's massive amounts of platform-hopping get forehead-smackingly frustrating. The huge level designs can be confounding, and below Jedi Knight difficulty the A.I. is weaker than Lobot. Don't let these things discourage you—this game will keep you enthralled until the very end, at which point you're likely to start all over again. A true destroyer.



PROTIP: You can diserm your opponents with e Force-pull, but remember that it would be unbefitting of a Jedi Knight to sley en unarmed opponent... sometimes.



Luke Skywalker smokes 'em all in a wicked six-man Jedi bettle that will make you regret ever thinking of him as e week sister.





PROTIP: Get in a haed shot for e one-hit kill (end yes, epperently Jedi do indeed use Wookie bowcasters).

GRAPHICS 4.5

Despite muddy cut-scenes, occasional frame rate dips, and some rough texturing, the graphics in Jedi Outcast murder. Amazing light-sources and particle effects combined with super-fluid animation make Outcast one of the most visually tasty console games ever.

SOUND 5.0

Star Wars games consistently boast wild sound design, and Outcast outshines them all with staggering amounts of musical cues and sound effects torn from the archives of Skywalker Sound. Even better is the excellent voice-acting with highest honors going to that of the most charming ladies' man in the land, Billy Dee Williams.

CONTROL 4.5

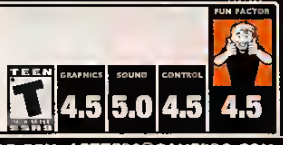
Tight, smooth, and elegant—verily you'll become a Jedi killing machine. The only drawback is that you have to take your thumb off the analog stick to toggle through weapons and Force abilities with the directional pad. Some frustration would've been avoided by having the action freeze while you navigate your inventories.

FUN FACTOR 4.5

Much more than an addictive single-player adventure with a bevy of riotous multiplayer modes, Jedi Outcast makes you feel like a Jedi unlike anything before it. Occasionally the platform-leaping gets tedious and some of the levels needed more work, but nevertheless Outcast dominates.



- Developed by Vicarious Visions
- Published by LucasArts
- $49.99
- Available now
- Adventure
- 2 players



PLAY IT AGAIN, MAN

AND AGAIN

AND AGAIN

SUPER BUBBLE POP



The outrageous 3D puzzle game with wild rave music and crazy bubble-popping action.



Groove as one of the five cool DJ poppers, each with a unique power-up and rocking moves.



150 levels of non-stop bubble popping action, the more bubbles you burst, the faster they come.

Jaleco ENTERTAINMENT

RUNECRAFT

PlayStation

XBOX

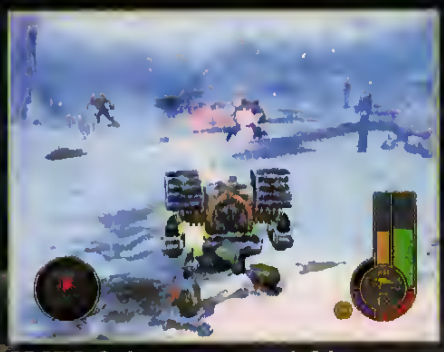
NINTENDO GAMECUBE

GAME BOY ADVANCE

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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MechAssault



MechAssault smashes its way onto the Xbox from the PC world of BattleTech. It's sure to assault the sensibilities of sim-minded MechWarrior purists, but the game's single-player campaign mode is a whole ton of fun for gamers just looking to wade into combat with a mean-ass metal rig.

Assault with a Deadly Weapon

The 20 missions pit your machinas against all sorts of W.O.B. aircraft, gun emplacements, and armor, including their own legion of nasty Mechs. Unlike the first-person, sim-style, lumbering of Steel Battalion, MechAssault is a fast, third-person, all-out steal slugfest. The early missions are a breeze, but later on you're fighting for your Mech-life. The controls do a terrific job of mastering BattleMech movement and weapons systems, and your Mach can destroy almost every piece of architecture and terrain in the game.

PROTIP: Perfect a run-n-gun attack: Select a weapon with infinite ammo, move tha Mech with the left stick, aim tha weapon with the right stick, and look for tha weapons lock indicator.



Of course, during the game's arcade-style firefights, the Mechs walk a fine line between moving like a man and a machina. They mostly feel mechanical as you would axpect with a 100-ton warcraft, but sometimes they feel unrealistically like a 100-ton ostrich, too.

The armor-plated melee looks and sounds lika a glorious battle. Every class of mechs sports excallent war-tech details. The deep sounds also have range, from the thunderous roar of a collapsing ice bridge to the weak yelps of soldiers when you singe their behinds.



PROTIP: Word of Blake forces will gang up on you. Use cover to evada double-teams and more powerful Mechs, then ambush them with hit-n-run tactics.

PROTIP: Weapons fired from lina of sight and long ranga are just as affective as whan they are locked onto a targat at closa ranga.

Mean Machine

MechAssault is Xbox Live ready. It's a great option, but multiplayer mech mayhem may not be your reason to buy this game. It requires the strategy of a heavyweight fistfight more than the faster-paced run-n-gun action of, say, a gama like Halo.

MechAssault is a blitzkrieg of metal-mauling combat and strategy, purely for stick jockeys. It's no sim, but it's not simpla aither. G



PROTIP: Don't destroy yourself! Get too close to any major explosion such as a dafaatad Mech, and it can taka you out, too.



PROTIP: You can't stora salvage. If your Mech's maxad out, leave tha extra laying around in case you need it in an amargency.



- Developed by Day 1 Studios
- Published by Microsoft
- $49.99
- Action
- Available now
- 4 players

BY BROTHER BUZZ

TEEN	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
	5.0	4.5	4.0	4.5

Superman: The Man of Steel



Superman's Xbox debut follows tha Spider-Man formula this time around—fly around the skyscrapers and smite evil—but tha big blue Boy Scout simply can't inspira the giddy thrill of soaring around the buildings the way Peter Parker did. You do aventually escape the city limits and tool around the Phantom Zone fighting the forces of Lax Luthor and Brainiac 13, but you're basically tha Metropolis messengar boy, switching betwaan different sets of repetitive tasks (you'll smash an awful lot of robots). The graphics don't inspire you to want to explore—they're detailed (Supes' trademark red cape flows nicely and his enemy-freezing ice breath looks keen) but soulless, and the cinamas could use more punch. Tha inana voice-acting doesn't work as modern narration or retro kitsch, and tha tepid synthesizer score lacks appropriate majesty. The controls don't make flying around nearly as much fun or intuitive as it could ba—it's easy to get caught on a building trying to circla-strafa around it—and on land, the pokey walk animation makes Superman quite a bit slower than a speeding bullet.

PROTIP: When putting out the bank fires in Mission 3, stick and move in a circle—freeze each fire and rotate quickly to the next.



PROTIP: Yellow robots can't be destroyed with heat vision or ice breath, but you can slow them down with either one.

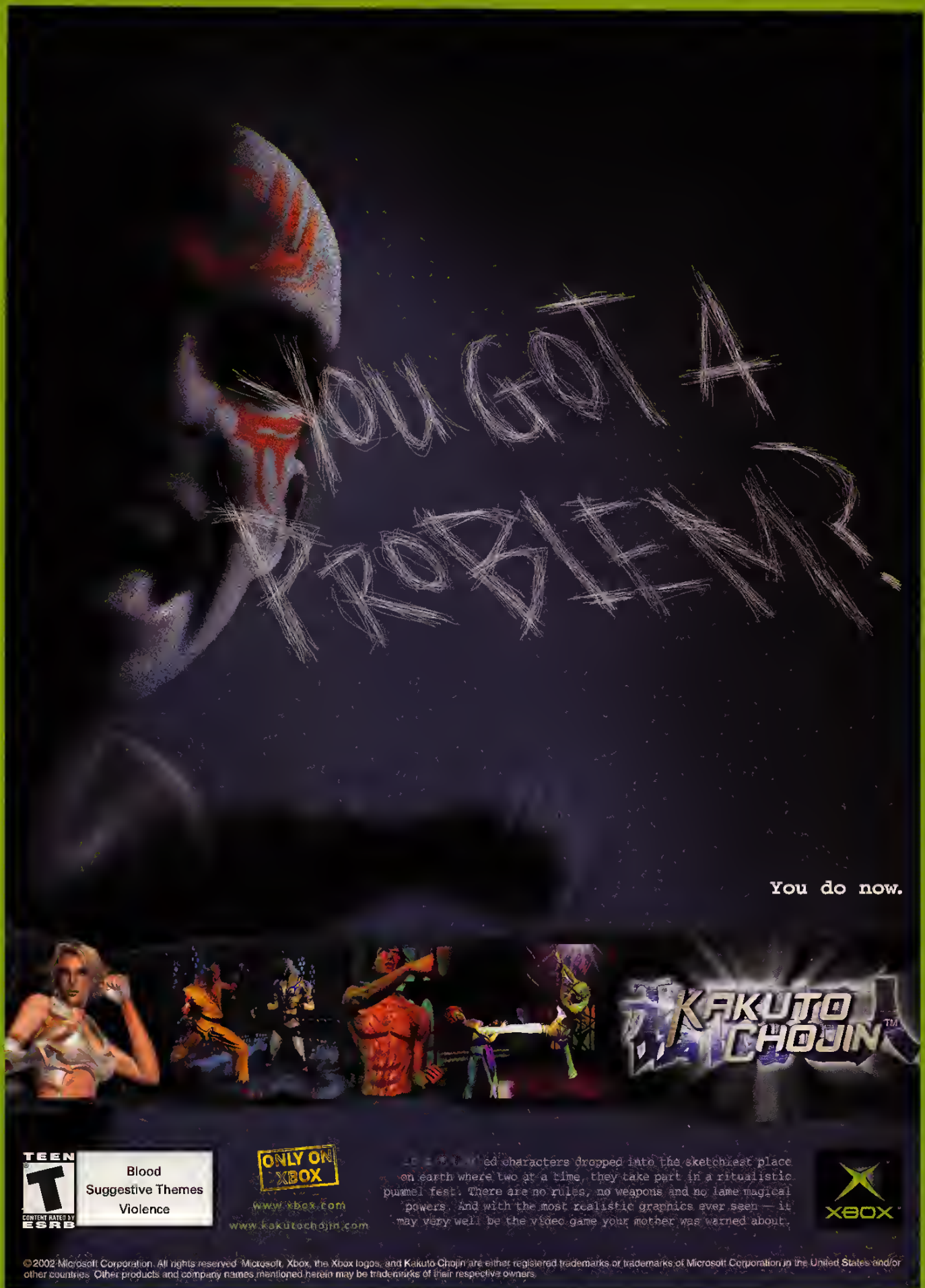
Ultimately, no matter how many bonuses are unlocked or how many special guests show up, the core gameplay of Superman: The Man of Steel is boring. Up, up, and away with it. G



- Developed by Circus Freak
- Published by Infogrames
- $49.99
- Action/adventure
- Available now
- 1 player

BY DAN ELEKTRO

TEEN	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
	3.5	2.0	2.5	2.0


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TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Suggestive Themes
Violence
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ed characters dropped into the sketchiest place on earth where two at a time, they take part in a ritualistic pummel fest. There are no rules, no weapons and no lame magical powers. And with the most realistic graphics ever seen — it may very well be the video game your mother was warned about.
XBOX
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colin mcrae rally 3

HUGE IN EUROPE, rally racing hasn't made a dent in the thick bodywork of NASCAR's popularity in the United States, but Colin McRae Rally 3 is such a high-quality game that serious race fans simply have to take it for a spin.

Tires Spinning

As always with the McRae series, the sublime handling of your car is what makes this game so appealing. In every powerslide you set up, in every spin you fight your way out of, the car performs like it's reading your mind. The game's eight tracks offer plenty of fertile territory in which to enjoy that responsiveness, and in this first McRae outing since the PlayStation days, the terrain is much more lifelike, 3D, and realistic. Drivers will delight in conquering its challenges.



PROTIP: Even wet tarmac has a much snappier, crisper response than dirt or gravel when powersliding.



PROTIP: Rally racing's not about gonzo speed; it's about controlling your car. So it's always wiser to brake or get off the gas then to blindly rocket ahead.

The new Championship mode offers both new ground and new limits. For the first time, you can play as McRae and drive his famous Ford Focus, but you can *only* play as him, which makes the focus of the game's only season-style action too narrow. Four-player action and single races add a little variety, but there's no online support, and McRae is the only real-life driver in the game.

Fantastic graphics make the action a treat as great lighting, dust effects, car damage, and more put on a serious show. Only the minor pop-up mars the effect. On the sound side, the audio is tightly focused on your car with excellent sound effects and co-driver pace notes, but to many, it will seem a bit quiet.



PROTIP: Before the last time check in Spain's Special Stage 1, prepare for a series of brutally tight S-turns.

Mud Flying

Only the restrictive Championship mode and the nature of rally racing itself (one car soloing on the track at a time, best result wins) confines the appeal of McRae 3—it's a racer's game, not a gamer's game. If that's you, McRae 3 is as alluring as a gleaming, freshly waxed sports car.



PROTIP: Right before the second time check in Finland's Special Stage 1, brake hard for what your co-driver calls a "double caution long 4 left tightens," or you'll plummet off a cliff.



PROTIP: If your tires are still spinning after you've exited a turn, briefly get off the gas to regain traction.





BY AIR HENDRIX

- Developed and published by Codemasters
- $49.99
- Available December
- Racing
- 4 players

EVERYONE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	4.5	4.0	5.0	4.5

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

IT'S A CRYING shame that such a fantastic license turned into such a mediocre game. While Hogwarts looks pretty (as well it should on the Xbox) and the game looks and sounds like the books and movies it's based on, the tedious gameplay smacks of derivative design. A few painful gameplay choices, like the fact that enemies never seem to die (they either respawn immediately or are just "knocked out"), the way the controls never seem quite precise enough, and how the book's great plot is constantly delayed by been-there-done-that busy-work that's not nearly as good as the games Harry Potter's trying to imitate.



Remember that part in Quidditch where Harry flies through rings over and over? Neither do we.



PROTIP: To defeat Malfoy in the duel, use Expelliarmus to reflect his attacks until one of them knocks him down. Once he's down, pelt him with Filpendo until it's over.

Harry Potter's core fans will find things to like about this version, though. All of your favorite characters are here in their loud, very British glory, and Harry is quite good at wielding spells when he's not flying through repetitive rings in the game's horrid attempt at Quidditch. It's cool just exploring Hogwarts and seeing locations from the book, and fans will go nuts interacting with Harry Potter's world.

Still, it's nowhere near as good as it could have been. Harry Potter fans will like this game, but the rest of the world is better off playing hooky from Hogwarts.



BY D-PAD DESTROYER

- Developed by Eurocom
- Published by EA Games
- $49.99
- Available now
- Adventure
- 1 player

EVERYONE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	4.5	3.5	3.0	3.5

007 NightFire

In its previous 007 titles, EA banked more on the quality of the license than on the quality of its games. With NightFire, EA reverses that trend and deploys a solid first-person shooter. It's still not a landmark game, but it is—at last—a good one.



PROTIP: When you man the guns on the snow-mobile, tap Y to cutomatically flip 180 degrees end target the letest threat.

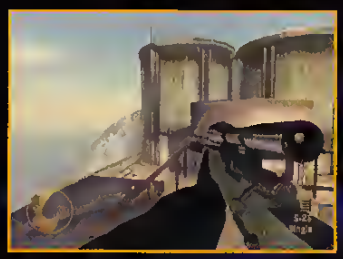
Her Majesty's Secret Service

Last year's caper, Agent Under Fire, floundered because of its oppressive 007 cliches, weak A.I., and lackluster gameplay—but NightFire makes strides in all those areas. The engaging levels, which mix first-person combat, rail shooting, and vehicular battles, are a lot more interesting and polished, and the multiplayer side is quite impressive, offering vast options and thrilling action. The A.I. is much brighter, and the difficulty levels are scaled more smoothly. The controls could use a crisper auto-aim and more efficient item management, but otherwise handle great.

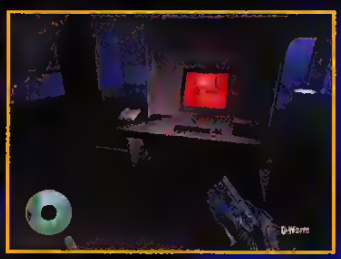


PROTIP: When entering rooms with multiple enemies, first toss in e stun grenede, but be sure to retreat end turn your back to the flash.

Although the cliches of the Bond franchise—girls, gadgets, and the dashing spy himself—are used in a less heavy-handed fashion, EA still lays it on too thick. There's more smooching in this game than in any other first-person shooter, and although the graphics generally look great, they're not good enough for Bond to look anything but seriously wrong as he locks lips with each cut-scene's token babe. The audio offers hackneyed dialogue, decent weapons sounds, and the ever-present Bond theme song.



PROTIP: In Chain Reaction, dear the snipers off nearby rooftops before entering the first building.



PROTIP: In Night Shift, install the Q-Worm on the computer with the red monitor screen inside door 70E.

Live & Let Live

Like the movies, you know what you're getting with this game, and for the first time in a while, there's a reasonable measure of quality behind it. NightFire will make an awesome rental for most gamers and a decent buy for Bond fans and FPS junkies.



BY AIR HENDRIX

- Developed by Eurocom
- Published by EA Games
- $49.99
- Available now
- First-person shooter
- 4 players

ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
T	4.5	3.5	4.0	4.0

TimeSplitters 2

TimeSplitters 2 easily challenges for best FPS on the GameCube and PS2, but on the Xbox it must compete against Papa Halo. While it doesn't quite edge out Microsoft's juggernaut, it puts up an extremely fine fight.



PROTIP: Zombies are tough, but they have e familier weakness. Breek out the shotgun and give them a 12-gauge heircut.

Bananas and Blaster Rifles



PROTIP: The minigun's barrels have to spin up to speed before it can fire, but you can hit the L button to get it spinning constantly.

TimeSplitters 2's time-jumping story line is much improved over that of the original PS2 launch tide, but it still serves best as an excuse to jump into wildly different multiplayer arenas and have at it, using weapons from crossbows to plasma rifles as you quest, essentially, to blow everything that moves into a fine mist. As central as shooting is to the gameplay, though, there's more to TimeSplitters 2 than that. Clever missions and unconventional tasks (à la GoldenEye) keep combat-jaded gamers from getting bored.

With few exceptions, TimeSplitters 2 handles itself on the Xbox with ease. While the game's cartoony graphics are a bit too simple to be completely impressive, they definitely help carry out the game's none-too-serious mood and fast-action feel. The Xbox controller feels more awkward than that of the other two systems, but it requires only a tiny bit more practice for it to become second nature. Just like in the other versions, the game's music and sounds are completely topnotch, and if you're burning for multiplayer options, TS2 easily delivers on that front with LAN support and an easy-to-use Map Maker included.



PROTIP: There ere guns end armor hidden in the windows in Neotokyo. Just crash through the glass to pick them up.



PROTIP: Run eheed of Remona elong her escape route so you can take out eny foes on her way out before sha gets there.

Life After Halo

Yeah, yeah, you already have Halo. TS2 is no Halo, but it's really, really close. For fast-paced and light-hearted FPS action, it takes a Halo to beat TimeSplitters 2.



BY DUNJIN MASTER

- Developed by Free Radical
- Published by Eidos
- $49.99
- Available now
- Action
- 16 players

ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
T	4.5	5.0	4.5	5.0

Kakuto Chojin

ALTHOUGH IT'S SLIM pickings if you're lookin' for a good fight on the Xbox, stay clear of Kakuto Chojin—unless it's the only brawler that's left on the shelves at the rental store on a Saturday night.

Kakuto Chojin attempts to be an exciting pugilist but fails miserably. The basic fight style seems acceptable on paper: Each combatant has low, medium, high, and special attacks, while specific button presses enable you to throw hard-hitting combinations. But once the round starts, fights are enervating to play. Slow button response is the major contributor to the awful gameplay. Additionally, pulling off a distinct combo requires the same button presses among all the fighters.



PROTIP: Don't bother to perform any type of mid-kick to Asad. He'll automatically counter it with ease.

Even the sights and sounds are unbearable. Characters are shiny—literally—in detail. Clothes, skin, and hair all reflect light brightly and abnormally. Also, the fighting arenas are small, cramped, and designed with little imagination. Worst of all are the annoying and lame hand-slapping sound effects each time a fighter makes contact with their fists and feet.

Truly, Kakuto Chojin ranks low in the combat field. Don't even bother participating in a match unless you're willing to endure a lot of unnecessary pain.



PROTIP: In Survival mode, run away a lot so that you lure only a single fighter toward you. You'll get pummeled if you try to fight the entire group.



BY FOUR-EYED DRAGON

- Developed by Dream Publishing
- Published by Microsoft
- $49.99
- Fighting
- Available now
- 4 players

ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
TEEN T	3.0	2.0	2.5	2.5

Phantom Crash

IN THE FAR-FLUNG future, man's voracious energy consumption finally catches up to him. But even with civilization chasing technological meltdown, the world's favorite pastime is a metal-mangling mech version of *Robot Wars* called Rumbling. Phantom Crash places you on the fight card at the controls of a mobile, armor-plated war-machine called a Scoobee. In your quest for Rumbling immortality, you play part mechanic, part mech-warrior.



PROTIP: Try to equip your Scoobee with homing weapons like the Aspide missile launcher, especially for your rookie battles.

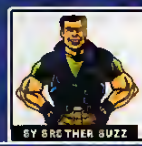
A port of a Japanese game by Genki, Crash sports plenty of high-tech Asian cool. The mechs look awesome, and you'll blast to the last amid the arena-like ruins of Tokyo. The hypnotic sounds soar with 70 spacey, sometimes eerie, trance-style tunes.

There's a genuinely weird RPG story line to the game, too, but the intense, freewheeling combat dominates. The multifaceted controls utilize every Xbox button as you orchestrate four separate weapons, 360-degree mech movement, quick hover bursts, and even dodges and strafes. They also manage a goodly amount of garage time as you build up and repair your rigs with 65 weapons, 150 body parts, and 16 A.I. chipsets.

Like a lot of mech games, in the end Phantom Crash is basically a metal-to-metal slugfest. But with a slick visual style and fast-paced, finger-banging combat, it's an impressive display of power and polish.



PROTIP: Your best evasive maneuvers are to hit A for a quick vertical leap skywards or to press X to activate your Optic Camouflage.



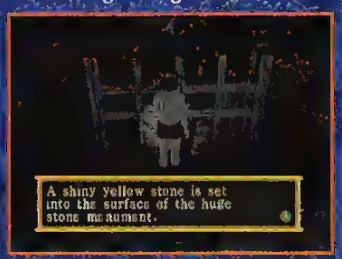
BY BROTHER BUZZ

- Developed by Genki
- Published by Encore
- $49.99
- Action
- Available now
- 4 players

ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
TEEN T	4.5	4.0	4.5	4.0

Fatal Frame

BOASTING MUSCULAR VISUALS and an ominously droning musical score, this one's got atmosphere coming out of every orifice. But despite a few well placed jolts, it lacks the unmentionable-damaging impact of more fright-fraught fare like Silent Hill 2. Fatal Frame features all the requisite Japanese horror film elements like ghosts, creepy little girls, hissing old ladies, tortured psychics, and freaky flashback sequences; the subliminally spine-chilling sound design is comprised of static-drowned moans, chanting kids, and crooning phantoms. The Xbox port even includes new unlockable costumes, a dozen or so new ghosts, and an alternate ending—add it all up, and it's enough to make up for the hokey magic ghost-snuffing camera concept.



PROTIP: You'll find the Gold Carving by examining the monument in Square Garden.

But as boffo as Frame's production values are, it still doesn't get past typical survival/horror trappings like object arrangement puzzles, brain-dead dubbing, interminable backtracking, fussy controls, and camera angles that, while cinematically slick, get in the way of the gameplay. Depending on your taste, you'll either become a fan of the game's unique camera combat system or find it a royal pain, especially later in the game as enemy ghosts get fast as hell and tougher than Leo Marvin. Fatal Frame may be derivative and plodding at times, but it's still a solid choice for horror fanatics, especially considering that genre offerings on the Xbox are few and far between.



PROTIP: Against hostile ghosts, wait until the camera's targeting reticule turns red to take a picture—you'll cause more damage that way.



BY PONG SIFU

- Developed and published by Tecmo
- $49.99
- Horror
- Available now
- 1 player

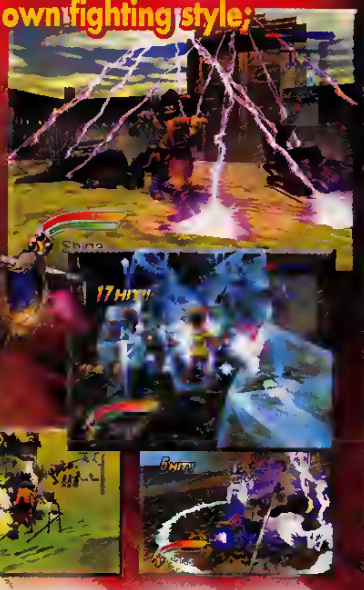
ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
TEEN T	4.0	4.5	3.0	3.0

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PlayStation®2

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

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Meet the world's most notorious drivers on the streets of LA, Paris, and Tokyo.



Choose from the latest performance enhanced vehicles and compete to make a name for yourself.



There are no rules - drive anywhere in the city. Find the fastest route to win.

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence

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PlayStation.2



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R

NHL 2K3

HOCKEY HAS NEVER been fairly represented in the world of video games. Sure, plenty of hockey games have been ridiculously fun, but always at the cost of realism or accurate simulation. NHL 2K3 changes all that, and hockey fanatics should greet it with the same cheers they rain on their hometown team as the players hit the ice.



PROTIP: If you're trying to carry the puck past a defender, either use a deke or protect the puck. If you just skate by, there's almost no chance you'll emerge with the puck.

Rookie of the Year

The previous two editions of NHL 2K on the Dreamcast sparkled with potential though not with polish, but NHL 2K3 delivers like a first-round draft choice ripening into a star after a stint in the minors. It's not a souped-up arcade-style scoring contest, but a fittingly realistic and authentic representation of the sport. Hockey fans will relish touches like managing their team's breakout style, separately changing offensive and defensive lines, or pinning an opponent along the boards while they skirmish for the puck. When you bury one in the twine, you feel like you actually earned it, rather than just getting lucky on a dice roll.

The robust features don't set a new standard or anything, but they cover the bases. Alongside the usual Season, Playoff, and Tournament modes, a deep Franchise mode lets you get lost in haggling over player contracts, fiddling with a massively detailed line editor, and toying with the minutiae of strategy. The ESPN presence cloaks everything, but that's the only gimmick to be found.



PROTIP: If you lack the momentum for a check, a poke check can be a very effective defensive play.



PROTIP: When you're pinned along the boards, kick the puck free to a teammate.



PROTIP: Don't try for one-timers too close to the crease, or the goalie will just scoop up the puck.



PROTIP: If you're defending your zone against an onrushing opponent, make your play at the blue line.



PROTIP: If you're trying to pass but opponents might intercept the puck, hold the Pass button for a flip pass that skips over their sticks.



PROTIP: Never let opponents linger in front of your goalie—start throwing checks to clear out the area.

All-Star Ballot

For those gamers who have the luxury of choosing between systems, the Xbox is definitely the way to go. Not only do the Xbox graphics look a notch sharper and better, but more importantly, it's the only version that supports online play. The PS2 and GameCube editions are also excellent choices, though the PS2 graphics are a tad rougher, and because of the sports-unfriendly GameCube controller, that version doesn't handle as smoothly.

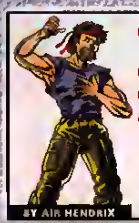
In all three versions, the controls are a real breakthrough for hockey games. They're so complex that they have their own separate difficulty levels, so if you prefer to stick with the standard (or "beginner") hockey format, have at it. But as you immerse yourself in the game, you'll probably be tempted to try out some of the bells and whistles, and you'll be intrigued by the depth that emerges as you learn to kneel to block a shot or kick the puck when pinned against the boards.

The graphics and sounds are not the high point, but they're perfectly respectable. Detailed animations mostly give the players a realistic grace, but they're sometimes a bit robotic. Overall, the visuals could use a few more layers of polish and pizzazz—they're serviceable but lack any real eye candy.

The audio is much the same. Supported by two no-name but decent announcers, the standard array of organ music and on-ice sound effects colors in the background of the action without making you pause to appreciate it.

Hart Trophy

NHL 2K3 probably won't find a huge audience because many gamers turn to hockey games not for a simulation of the sport, but for spine-shattering checks and double-digit scoring. Of course there's nothing wrong with that, but those gamers should fire up NHL 2003 or NHL Hitz 20-03 for their dose of board-battering goodness. However, if you're looking to play hockey of the NHL variety, to tackle pro challenges and use real-life strategies, NHL 2K3 will thrill you as much as watching your team heroically survive a five-on-three penalty kill.



- Developed by Visual Concepts
- Published by Sega
- $49.99
- Hockey
- Available now
- 4 players

	ESRB	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
PS2	E	3.5	4.0	5.0	5.0
GC	E	4.0	4.0	4.5	5.0
XBOX	E	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0

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2002

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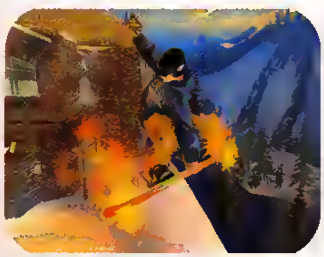
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NCAA College Basketball 2K3

SEGA IS LEVERAGING its dominance in the NBA basketball category into a successful college offshoot. NCAA College Basketball 2K3 is an entry worthy of its big brother, complete with its own set of smooth controls, elaborate play modes, and sharp A.I.

Year One

It seems hard to believe that NCAA College Basketball 2K3 will be Sega's first entry into this field. What's not hard to believe is that the game is very good, verging on great. Using a highly modified version of last year's NBA 2K engine, developer Kush was able to cram in most of the fancy features of NBA 2K into NCAA 2K, along with distinctive new animation and game atmosphere. It also managed to find space for an insane number of teams, over 300 in all, and online support for the Xbox and PlayStation 2 to boot. Controls for the PS2 and Xbox work well, but the GameCube version's lag a bit behind due to the pad's button layout.



PROTIP: Shot blocks are more frequent than in NBA 2K3, so adjust your shot and strategy accordingly.

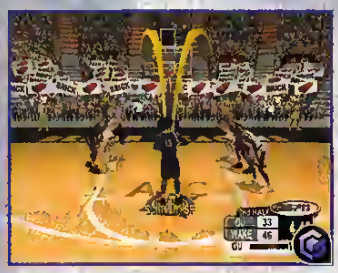
Head to Head to Head

On the PS2, NCAA 2K3 stacks up well against its chief rival, EA's March Madness 2003, enjoying an edge in visual presentation. EA's crowds look better, but Sega's stadiums have more intricate detail. 989's NCAA Final Four 2003 has both games beat with the superior character models, although Sega's animations are far more smooth and therefore more realistic looking. The Xbox and GameCube versions of 2K3 have slightly smoother graphics than the PS2 version.

Crowd and band music for NCAA 2K3, March Madness, and Final Four is even, but the play-by-play in 2K3 is tops. Sega has ported its NBA voice-over magic to the college realm with superlative results. EA retains the lead in sound fidelity through surround systems but not by much. Between the three versions of 2K3, the Xbox has only a slight edge in audio presentation.



NCAA has many new animations not seen in its NBA sibling, giving the game more of its own identity.



PROTIP: Nailing free throws is a great way to get your team and crowd back into the action.

NCAA 2K3 has come to the table loaded with features and worthy coaching modes, and still has an advantage carried over from its NBA game. Not far behind are 989's Final Four, which took copious notes from its own family member, NBA ShootOut, to stay respectively competitive, and March Madness's vast additions to the framework built by NBA Live, earning it the "most improved" honors.



PROTIP: Screen plays are about all you can do to clear room to work in Gym rat mode.



PROTIP: The zone is great for making those college kids crack under pressure.

Where the wheat gets separated from the chaff, however, is the A.I.; and Sega's game is all whole-grain goodness. 2K3 spruces things up with faster action and a looser feel that matches nicely with the college experience. NBA Live was all about being fast and loose, so March Madness simply reined that in a tad and adjusted the play balance. EA's CPU is still not as smart as Sega's game, but then again college ball is relatively forgiving so it's almost a push. 989's Final Four is definitely the off-campus hopeful still in need of seasoning in this regard.



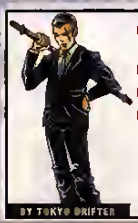
PROTIP: Calling quick plays is important, but it's not as useful as kon passing—so beware of the default control setting.



PROTIP: Many teams have weak transition games, so get a lineup that allows you to cash in easy alley-oops.

Room for Two

The fact that NBA 2K3 lords over its competition in terms of pure simulation quality is clear. NCAA College Basketball 2K3 is a complete school-ball experience that's both fun and feature rich. The freshman debut of this series has quickly moved to the head of the class, but it has to share the seat of honor with NCAA March Madness 2003.



- Developed by Kush/Visual Concepts
- Published by Sega
- $49.99
- Basketball
- 4 players
- Available December

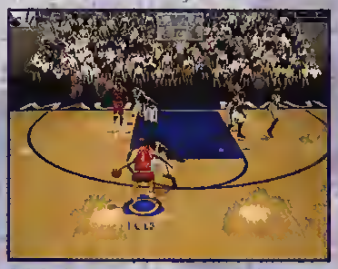
	Graphics	Sound	Control	Fun Factor
PS2	4.5	5.0	5.0	4.5
GameCube	4.5	4.5	4.0	4.5
Xbox	4.5	5.0	5.0	4.5

NCAA March Madness 2003

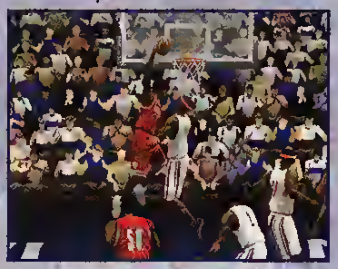
NCAA MARCH MADNESS 2003 looks and plays like a college-themed version of NBA Live, which isn't such a bad thing. Improved play balance and an incredibly deep feature set put this baby neck and neck with Sega's college-hoops top seed, NCAA 2K3.

The arcade emphasis found in NBA Live 2003 has been toned down a notch and adjusted to fit this raw brand of basketball. The Freestyle Stick is still king in March Madness 2003, but shot percentages are lower and fouls called tighter, giving it a closer resemblance to real basketball. EA has also wisely taken note of NBA 2K3 and included gameplay sliders that enable you to adjust any critical areas you feel are too exploitative.

All the sights and sounds of the college game including mascots are faithfully re-created. Player models feature new body types common among amateur athletes, and animations look as explosive as ever. The frame rate and overall detail definition are not as smooth as Live's, and they are also a step below Sega's NCAA 2K3. Tons of band music and fight songs are pitch perfect, and getting Dick "Awesome Baby!" Vitale to sit in on commentary with Brad Nessler warms the heart. Dick often goes too quiet at times, but everyone needs to catch their breath, it seems.



PROTIP: As in NBA Live 2003, the Freestyle Stick is overpowering, so your mastery of jukes from that game...



PROTIP:...will allow you to perform dunk after dunk. Fortunately, it's college ball so your players will miss shots a bit more.

March Madness 2003's many gameplay modes and overall fun factor give it even odds against Sega's hoops powerhouse. While the series has strayed from its hardcore sim roots pioneered by Coach K College basketball way back in the Genesis's heyday, it at least has defined an identity and found a fun formula as well.

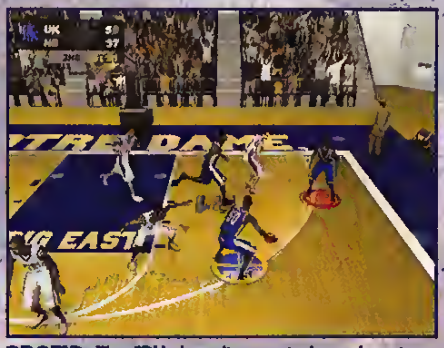


- Developed by NuFX/EA Canada
- Published by EA Sports
- $49.99
- Basketball
- Available now
- 4 players

BY TOKYO DRIFTER

EVERYONE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	4.0	4.5	5.0	4.5

NCAA Final Four 2003



PROTIP: The CPU doesn't seem to know how to counter icon screening, so use it often.

NCAA FINAL FOUR 2003 will turn heads with its high-powered character models and enjoyable Dynasty mode. However, poor A.I., stiff controls, and rough game flow may make you turn back around again.

989 Sports definitely deserves some respect for putting together a game that's completely different from its NBA sibling. The graphics are much better, the commentary is more consistent, and the overall feature selection is fantastic. The visual details on the players tops EA's and Sega's offerings even though the body proportions are off.

Where the game lets the home crowd down is the actual play experience. Teammates and opponents have A.I. problems like not reacting to each other in logical ways. The game also has an unsettling pace that makes it hard to become one with the game.



Final Four is the only college game with cheerleaders dancing at half time, a sadly forgotten tradition in other games.

The controls also have issues starting with the default button configuration. After going through a half season of play, it just never feels right that the intentional foul button is one of the front shoulder buttons that can be pressed accidentally several times a game.

NCAA Final Four 2003 is actually much closer to catching the top dogs in this category than in the NBA arena. With improvements in control and gameplay, 989 Sports has a shot at advancing past the Sweet Sixteen next year.



- Developed and published by 989 Sports
- $39.99
- Basketball
- Available now
- 8 players

BY TOKYO DRIFTER

EVERYONE	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
E	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.0

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Suikoden III
幻想水滸伝

THE REAL SUIKODEN (a 14th Century Chinese novel) followed 108 "Stars of Destiny" as they fought a corrupt kingdom. The third Suikoden video game (an early 21st Century Konami epic) follows dozens of characters as they're swept into a new war between Zexen and Grassland. Both are among the best in their respective genres...coincidence?



PROTIP: The Twin Snake is the first really hard boss you'll fight in Gaddoe's story. Use Joker's fire spells to take out the heads first because the left one heals the main body.

The Rolling Hills of Vinay del Zexay

Suikoden III is improved over its predecessors in more ways than is physically possible to list. Instead of one hero and one story, you go through chapters, each unfolding from the perspective of three different characters—an old idea that seems innovative all over again here. The graphics have made the great leap to 3D, and they're a laudable effort: The anime look is a great match for the game's fantasy world, and the characters display surprising amounts of emotion in the (still voiceless) cut-scenes. The only black marks: occasionally extreme slowdown and some wonky camera work.

The Cold Floors of The Great Hollow

Most of the annoying flaws from the last two Suikoden games have been removed. Battles now use a "pair" system that takes time to master, but fights are blazing fast and take almost zero time to load. There aren't nearly as many random encounters, thank heavens, and finding Stars is a ton easier as the conditions aren't as arbitrary as they were before.

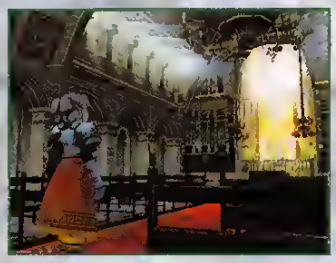
The best part of all? Undoubtedly the dialogue—it's actually well written this time, with no (okay, very few) typos and non sequiturs. It's great to see such an expertly crafted and epic title like this one get the English-language treatment it deserves.



PROTIP: If you don't particularly need medicine, don't pick up herbs you find in the field; the herbs will grow and become more potent later.



PROTIP: Mei may be certifiably insane, but sha's a great fighter in the early stages. Find her at Iksay Village.



PROTIP: Chris can save tons of cash by doing all her shopping inside the town hall. So use that executive privilege!



- Developed by KCET
- Published by Konami
- $49.99
- RPG
- Available now
- 1 player

FUN FACTOR

TEEN T ESRB

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.0	4.5	3.5	4.5

Phantasy Star Online Episode I&II

XBOX LIVE? BROADBAND ADAPTORS? Hah! That's all old hat to Sega fans—they got to play Phantasy Star Online, the first console MMORPG, on the Dreamcast two years ago. Now Sega's bringing the party to the GameCube, and the result is a dream for everybody—newbies *and* 200-level fanatics.



PROTIP: Enemies ganging up on you? Just leave the room for a moment—they won't follow you, giving you a chance to regroup. Too bad you can't attack from adjacent rooms....

I LEFT MY HEART AT TITAN 10-5

The basic gameplay is completely unchanged. Choosing from 12 (formerly nine) character classes, you must explore the dark underside of Ragol—either solo or online with a zillion other GameCube owners. If you don't have the cash for a network adapter, you can play with three other people offline with the new split-screen mode. Despite the slowdown during large battles, this mode works surprisingly well...but it's still no match for online play.

TWO RAPPIES WITH ONE SWORD

To say that Sonic Team added a lot of new stuff to PSO would be the understatement of the century. "Episode II" is a completely new story that's actually bigger than the entire Dreamcast game—it's all original and should be worth the price of admission alone to PSO fans. The graphics have taken a noticeable step up everywhere; there's still the occasional clipping problem, but the environments and weather effects look fantastic. There are loads of new items to find, too, and the difficulty's been thoroughly readjusted, making game progression much smoother (though Episode II is a bear to complete offline).

PSO's core hasn't changed too much for its GameCube debut, but it's still every bit the online addiction it always was. Sonic Team may never make another "real" Phantasy Star, but with games like these, who cares?



PROTIP: Androids (like the new HUcaseal) usually have better stats than human characters. Shame, then, that they can't learn any techniques.



PROTIP: Some walls are destroyable with your weapons. The big tipoff: your character is targeting something beyond a cracked wall.



PROTIP: The Barba Ray is similar to De Rol Le from Episode I. When it dives under your raft, run around to avoid its spines.



- Developed by Sonic Team
- Published by Sega
- $49.99
- Online RPG
- Available now
- 4 players

FUN FACTOR

TEEN T ESRB

GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	FUN FACTOR
4.0	4.0	4.5	4.5

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Final Fantasy X-2

The Wind...It's Nice

After a year's worth of silence on the next Final Fantasy, Square is doing something with its flagship series that it's never done before: making a sequel that actually retains characters from the previous game.



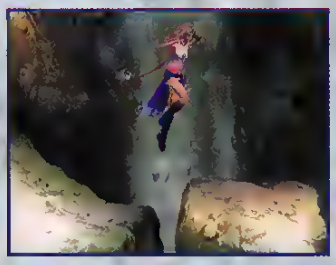
You Probably Shouldn't Laugh Anymore

Final Fantasy X-2 (pronounced "ten-two") will star Yuna, the serene summoner that Tidus spent most of the original FFX trying to pick up. It's two years after the end of the first game, and the land of Spira has changed immensely. Technology has advanced by leaps and bounds—even infiltrating the temples that dot the world—and Yuna will navigate via hovercrafts and other vehicles. She won't use summons anymore, but she'll have a pair of magical guns as her main weapon instead.

Although the setting may be the same, FFX2 will be much more than a simple expansion pack. The game will be far less linear, for one—Yuna is no stranger to this world, after all, so she'll be able to access a large area of game space right from the beginning. The Sphere Grid used to raise characters in FFX will be replaced, and the battle system will also receive a total overhaul. Even regular old field navigation will be more interesting: Yuna will need to jump and climb to overcome some of the trickier obstacles.



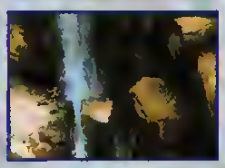
Ah, the lovely Yuna. She became a strong woman during Final Fantasy X...and, judging by this outfit, lost a lot of innocence in the process. Yowza!













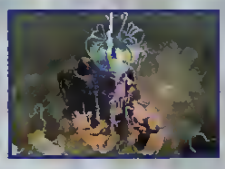




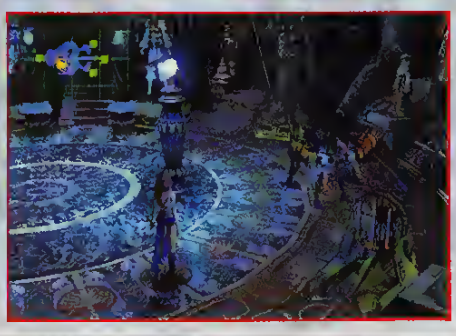


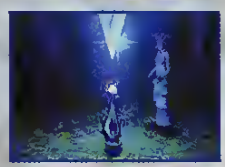












The Sublimely Magnificent Jecht Shot Mark III

Square hasn't gone into story specifics yet, but FFX2 will be a blast from the past (well, 2001) for RPG fans. Rikku, the spunky lady from FFX, will join Yuna for most of her quest (along with a new, unnamed female character). Other FFX supporting stars, like Wakka and Lulu, will also put in guest appearances.

The game hits Japan in March as part of a blockbuster Square lineup that includes new titles in both the SaGa and Final Fantasy Tactics series. An American release is likely to be announced sometime in 2003, possibly during next year's E^3 show. Now, about that FFXII...

BY FENNEC FOX



- Developed by SquareSoft
- Published by Square EA
- Target release date: March (Japan); To be determined (U.S.)

PlayStation 2

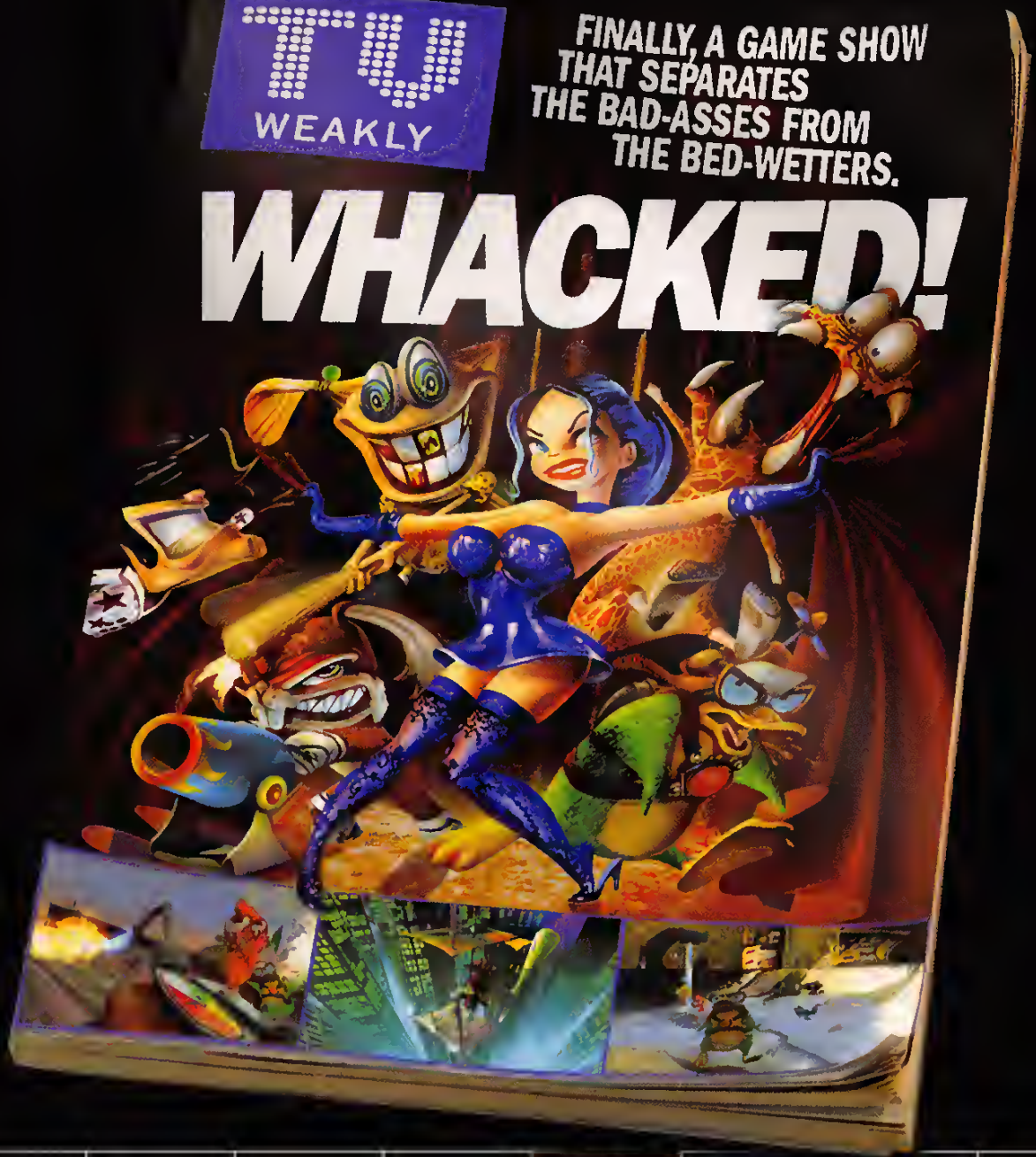
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EverQuest Online Adventures







EVERQUEST Online Adventures has finally entered beta, and there are a few treats in store for EverQuest veterans and n00bs alike. Aside from all the new cities, NPCs, and areas for adventure, EverQuest Online Adventures will present a totally different way to play EverQuest.





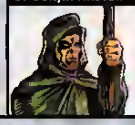


EverQuest Online Adventures will be completely playable with a PS2 controller, and in the preview version, the controls were already smooth and easy to learn. Combat will be simple: You'll target an enemy with R1 and hold down the × button to make it dead. The game's special abilities, which you'll learn by buying a scroll or receiving one as a quest reward, will make combat more interesting. Abilities will include spells for spellcasters and special combat maneuvers for more burly combat types. If you're planning to be social at all, though, you'll want to invest in a USB keyboard for your PS2.





If the final version is any better than the early build, it will definitely grow on those of you who are dying for an online hackfest for the PlayStation 2.



BY DUNJIN MASTER

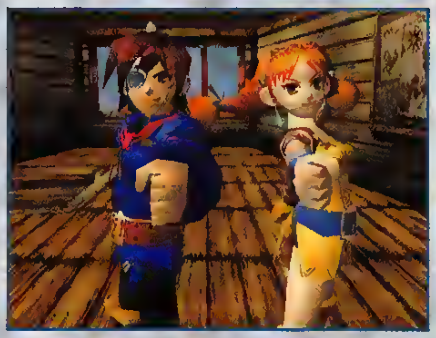
- Developed and published by Sony Online
- Target release date: February

PLAYSTATION 2

HANDS-ON

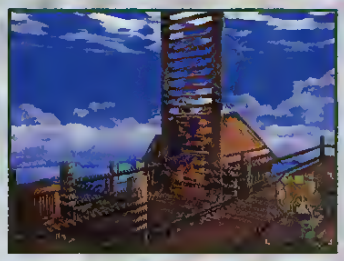
Skies of Arcadia Legends



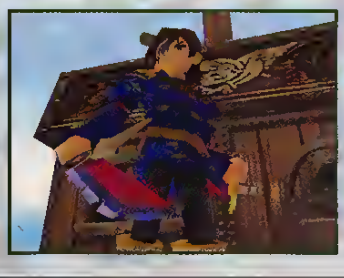


FOR GAMERS UNEDUCATED in the ways of Sega, the GameCube Skies of Arcadia looks...well, like the two-year-old game that it is. It'd be a terrible shame to dismiss it out of hand, though, because the original Skies was indisputably the best offline RPG the Dreamcast ever had. You want mind-blowing graphics? Go play Star Fox or something.

The U.S. previewable, while still exhibiting the occasional graphic bug, hinted at all the new bits Overworks is including in the 'Cube port. Battles were noticeably quicker, and there were markedly less random encounters, making for a far better paced game. If you liked the original's ship battles, prepare to be drowned in them: You'll get to hunt down rogue air pirates for big bucks, running into all sorts of new characters along the way (including a weird Vyse look-alike that steals your moves). Factoring in the new side quests and Discovery secrets, you're looking at quite a few hours of extra content on top of the original 40-hour game. It's almost too much.















BY FENNEC FOX

- Developed by Overworks
- Published by Sega
- Target release date: January

GAMECUBE

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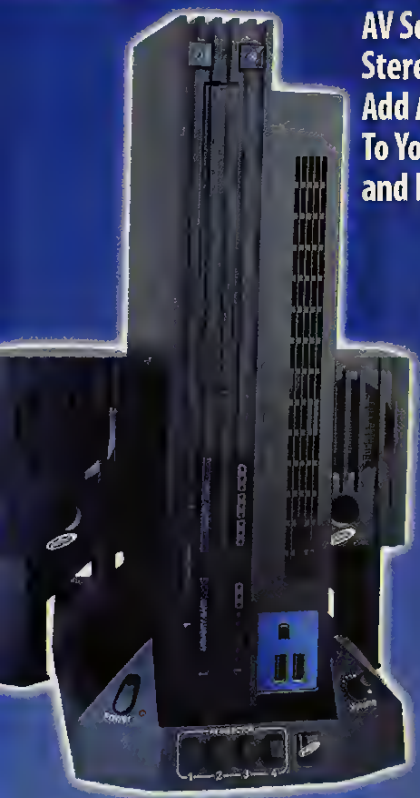
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TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Comic Mischief
Mature Sexual Themes
Mild Violence

Game experience may change during online play

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MATURE M ESRB

Shinobi

In this ProStrategy Guide, we show you vital techniques to make you a ninja master and give you the lowdown on how to unlock secret characters, stages, and more! By Musashi Mike

Basics

Air Fighting

One of the toughest, yet effective, uses of the Stealth Dash is performing the move while you're in the air in conjunction with the Sword Attack. In addition to destroying airborne enemies, aerial Stealth Dash/Sword Attacks enable you to cross over large gaps and reach otherwise inaccessible areas. This technique is also helpful when doing battle with large monsters, such as the two-headed ogres that appear in the later stages of the game. While it sounds daunting at first, "air fighting" can quickly become second nature if you keep the commands straight and keep your cool.

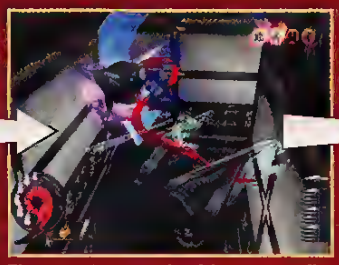
Air Fighting in Action



Get close to a group of airborne enemies, jump into the air, and then press and hold Lock-on–keep Lock-on held throughout the confrontation.



When the targeting ring appears on a foe, tap Stealth Dash, then tap Sword Attack, and then alternate between Stealth Dash and Sword Attack to hack the first foe to pieces.



The targeting ring should automatically go to the next enemy. Tap Stealth Dash, then tap Sword Attack, and then alternate between Stealth Dash and Sword Attack to kill the next foe.



Repeat the process until all enemies are defeated.

Secret Items

Normal, Hard, and Super

Scattered throughout almost every Stage are Crests of the Oboro Clan, or Secret Items. Collecting Secret Items unlocks new features in the Extra menu, such as a movie viewer, an art gallery, hidden characters, and additional stages. Each time you finish the game, a new skill setting becomes available. Here's the number of Secret Items in each Stage and on each difficulty setting:

Stage:	Normal:	Hard:	Super:
Stage 1-A:	3	1	1
Stage 1-B:	2	1	1
Stage 2-A:	1	1	1
Stage 2-B:	1	1	1
Stage 3-A:	2	1	1
Stage 3-B:	1	1	1
Stage 4-A:	2	1	1
Stage 4-B:	3	1	1
Stage 5-A:	2	1	1
Stage 6-A:	1	1	1
Stage 7-A:	1	1	1
Stage 8-A:	4	1	1
Stage 8-B:	1	1	1

Required Secret Items

Here's the number of Secret Items required to unlock Shinobi's secrets. You can access the most unlocked stuff in the Extra menu.

Movie: Collect 10 Secret Items, and you can watch every rendered cinema in the game.

Gallery: For the low price of 20 Secret Items, you, too, can gaze in amazement at some very cool original artwork.

Mortisune: 30 Secret Items will unlock Hotsuma's nemesis, Mortisune.

Joe Musashi: Collect 40 Secret Items to play as the "classic" Shinobi character.

Stage EX: Collect all 50 Secret Items to unlock this very challenging extra stage.

Secret Item Locations

Here's where you can find the location of every Secret Item in Normal, Hard, and Super mode.

Stage 1-A

Normal Mode

Secret Item #1 x5



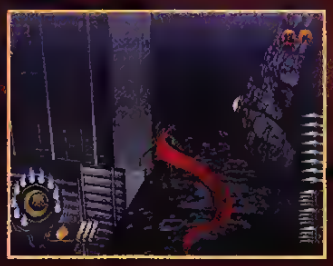
When you enter the first open area after the tank, head over to the right. You can find the first Secret Item in a small recess.

Secret Item #2



When you enter the open area with the second tank, immediately turn to the right. The second Secret Item is in a high recess.

Secret Item #3



After the second tank, look for a small recess across from the gate that's sealed by a Talisman. You can find the third Secret Item behind some tall rocks.

Hard Mode

Secret Item #4



After you collect the second Secret Item, destroy the tank and then look for an opening along the right wall in the open area. Enter the area and follow the alley to the Secret Item.

Super Mode
Secret Item #5



You can find the fifth Secret Item in the same area as the third one. When you initially enter the big area, stop and look up. You should see the Secret Item high in the sky.

Stage 1-B

Normal Mode x4
Secret Item #1



The first Secret Item is located in the second open area (after the alley lined with poison gas jets).

Secret Item #2



The second Secret Item is located in the third open area after the second alley of poison gas jets. Take the long way around the area in order to reach it.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #3



The last open area before the boss battle is where you can find the Secret Item. It's located atop a tall skyscraper near the exit.

Super Mode
Secret Item #4



The fourth Secret Item is in the same open area as the second one. You can find it tucked away in a corner.

Stage 2-A

Normal Mode x3
Secret Item #1



The first Secret Item in this stage is in the first open area that has cliffs. In order to reach the item, you must double jump toward it and then perform a Stealth Dash.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #2



The Secret Item is located on top of one of the red archways in the area just past the third gate that's sealed by a Talisman.

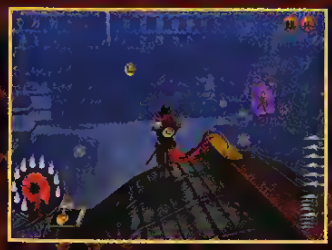
Super Mode
Secret Item #3



The Secret Item is suspended over a pit near the end of the stage.

Stage 2-B

Normal Mode x3
Secret Item #1



When you reach the first house, jump on the nearby fence, and—from there—jump onto the roof of the house. Face the Secret Item (it's suspended in the air), double jump toward it, and then perform a Stealth Dash to grab it.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #2



The Secret Item is on top of a tall cliff near the end of the stage.

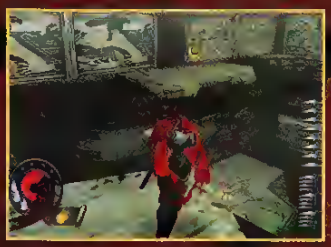
Super Mode
Secret Item #3



The third Secret Item is suspended in the air in the same open area as the second one. To get the item, walk on top of the wooden fence, wall run close to it, and then jump off the wall.

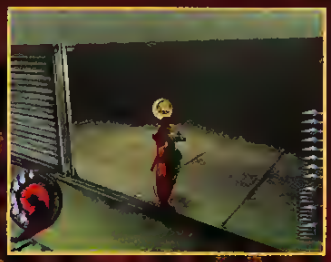
Stage 3-A

Normal Mode x4
Secret Item #1



The first Secret Item is in the big, multi-tiered room; when facing the item, run along the wall to your left, double jump off the wall, and then Stealth Dash onto the small platform. Repeat the same acrobatics to reach the ledge with the Secret Item.

Secret Item #2



The second Secret Item is near the end of the stage, hidden behind the double doors. If you haven't found the second Secret Item and you reach the tank, you've gone too far.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #3



In the last part of the stage (before the boss), you can find the third Secret Item. When facing the tank at the far end of the hall, smash the door along the wall to the right—you can find the item inside the small recess.

Super Mode
Secret Item #4



The fifth Secret Item is in the same room as the first one. You can see it near the center of the room, suspended high in the air.

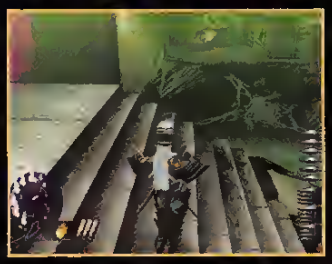
Stage 3-B

Normal Mode x3
Secret Item #1



When you reach the second gate that's sealed by a Talisman, turn right. Look for the Secret Item on the ledge that overhangs the exiting stone pillar.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #2



As you ascend the staircase that leads to the boss, stop and turn 45 degrees to the right. You should see the second Secret Item on a ledge across the room.

Super Mode
Secret Item #3



After you run up the ramp (as shown in the screen above), turn around and you can see the Secret Item.

Stage 4-A

Normal Mode x4
Secret Item #1



After you pass the first gate that's sealed by a Talisman, you can find the Secret Item to the right of the pool of lava as shown in the screen above.

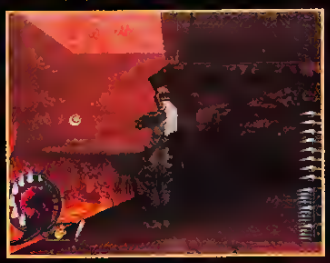


Secret Item #2



After you destroy the second tank (in front of the gate that's sealed by a Talisman), head to the left. The second Secret Item is at the end of the passage in a small dead-end recess.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #3



You can find the third Secret Item in the second-to-last area, after you destroy the tank. Stand at the large pool of lava and look to your right.

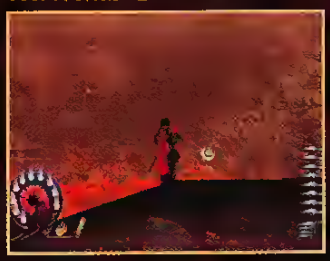
Super Mode
Secret Item #4



You can find the fourth Secret Item near the first tank. It's located in a recess across from the lantern with a Makimono inside of it.

Stage 4-B

Normal Mode x5
Secret Item #1



At the start of the Stage, turn around and walk to the edge of the island you're standing on. You can see the Secret Item hovering above the lake of lava below you.

Secret Item #2



The second Secret Item is in the third big, open area (or the first big open area after the first tank). To get the item, stand in the tallest nearby island, perform a double jump toward it, and right before you descend from the second jump, perform a Stealth Dash.

Secret Item #3



The last Secret Item in this mode is in the fourth open area. Look for the big island jutting from the wall that has a lower ledge. Jump on the ledge and follow it around to the third Secret Item.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #4



The Secret Item is in the open area with the first tank. It's located against the cave wall.

Super Mode
Secret Item #5



You can find the fifth Secret Item in the same open area as the third one. When you enter the area, look up and you should see it hovering high in the air. To collect the item, stand on the tallest nearby island, double-jump toward the item, and then tap Stealth Dash at the last moment.

Stage 5-A

Normal Mode x4
Secret Item #1



When you pass the second gate that's sealed by a Talisman and reach the open area, jump on top of the first tall building. Turn to the left and look for the Secret Item.

Secret Item #2



When you enter the last open area of the stage, run along the left wall, then jump to the adjacent wall. The Secret Item is next to the collapsed building (it looks like a ramp).

Hard Mode
Secret Item #3



When you enter the second open area, you can find the third Secret Item directly ahead of you

Super Mode
Secret Item #4



In the second to last open area, jump to the building in the center. Take a look around and you can see the fourth Secret Item located against a wall close to the water.


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Stage 6-A

Normal Mode
Secret Item #1 x3



When you reach the shaft with the exiting stone pillar directly ahead, walk out onto the platform, turn to the left, and then wall jump to the Secret Item.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #2



When you enter the final long vertical shaft, look 45 degrees to your right. You should see the second Secret Item up high and next to the wall.

Super Mode
Secret Item #3



You can find the Secret Item at the bottom of the last long vertical shaft in the stage (the same shaft where you found the second Secret Item).

Stage 7-A

Normal Mode
Secret Item #1 x3



Once you pass the first gate and reach the branching path, go to the right. After you defeat the enemies that appear, smash the fence, go behind the house, and find the Secret Item.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #2



When you pass through a gate and see a waterfall to your right, stop and look for the Secret Item that's partially concealed by trees.

Super Mode
Secret Item #3



The third Secret Item is suspended in the air near the series of waterfalls.

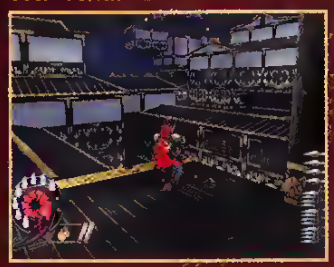
Stage 8-A

Normal Mode
Secret Item #1 x6



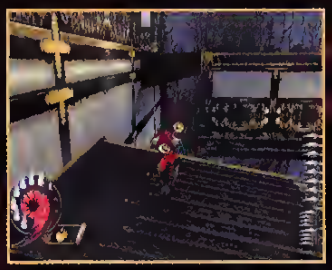
The first Secret Item is above the doorway through which you first enter the stage.

Secret Item #2



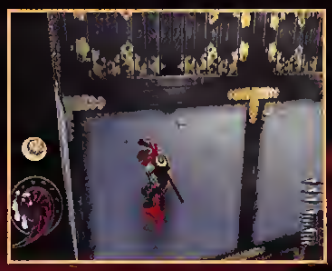
The second Secret Item is in the third open area, and the only way to acquire it is by using the "air fighting" technique (see "Air Fighting in Action" at the start of this ProStrategy Guide). When you enter the third open area, look approximately 45 degrees to your right; you can see the Secret Item on top of one of the towers.

Secret Item #3



You can find the third Secret Item underneath the exit of the fourth open area.

Secret Item #4



When you reach the last open area and you're facing the two tall towers, go to the on the left. You can find the Secret Item near the base of the tower on the extreme left wall.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #5



You can find the fifth Secret Item near the bottom of the first big house in the first open area, where the stage begins.

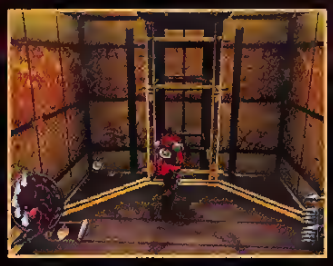
Super Mode
Secret Item #6



The last Secret Item in this stage is in the same area as the third one. When you first enter the stage, turn 45 degrees to your left—you should see the item suspended in the air.

Stage 8-B

Normal Mode
Secret Item #1 x3



The first Secret Item is in the second long room with the falling platforms. You can see the item in the lower-left corner of the room.

Hard Mode
Secret Item #2



The second Secret Item is in the room that's tilted on its side. You can find the item above the doorway through which you enter the room.

Super Mode
Secret Item #3



The third Secret Item is near the end of the stage. When you reach the top of the seemingly endless series of steps, face the door at the top and then turn around. You should see the Secret Item suspended in the air over to the right.



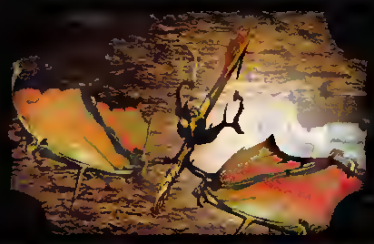


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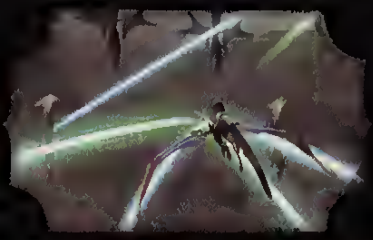
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TEEN

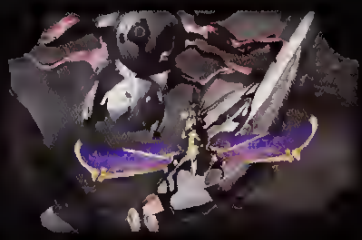
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Blood Violence

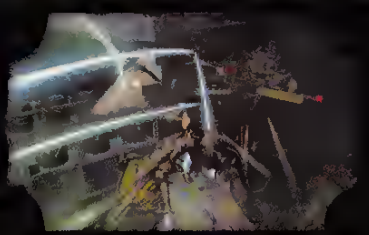






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TEEN T ESRB

RATCHET & CLANK

HAVING TROUBLE FINDING SOME OF THE GADGETS, WEAPONS, INFOBOTS, AND GOLD BOLTS IN INSOMNIAC'S LATEST CAT-THING AND ROBOT ADVENTURE? HERE ARE MAPS OF ALL 18 LEVELS TO HELP YOU OUT!

BY STAR DINGO



GOODIES MENU



After you beat the game once, a Goodies Menu will open up with nine different new options filled with cheats, cinemas, and all sorts of fun stuff. The first five are unlocked immediately; the rest (denoted by "????" in the menu) are available after you collect a certain amount of Skill Points or Gold Weapons.

BEAT THE GAME

Skill Points: Checklist with hints on how to obtain all 30 Skill Points as well as what level in which you can find them.

Credits: You can watch the end credits again to applaud the fine folks at Insomniac.



Cheats: A toggle menu for all the cheats you've successfully entered, from mirrored maps to several different Big Head modes.

Cinematics: Watch any Infobot or between-level story cinema.

In-Level Movies: Watch any of the in-game, real-time cut-scenes.

GET 15 SKILL POINTS

Sketchbook: Conceptual artwork with commentary text.

GET 30 SKILL POINTS

Epilogue: A neat-o "whatever happened to..." collection of faux magazine covers.

FIND ALL GOLD WEAPONS

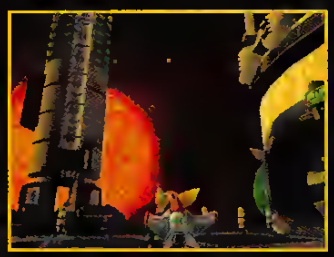
Making of Video: Behind-the-scenes at Insomniac.

Commercials: Three Ratchet & Clank TV spots, persuading you to purchase the game again after having beaten it repeatedly.

GOLD BOLTS AND GOLD WEAPONS

There are 40 Gold Bolts hidden throughout Ratchet & Clank's 18 expansive levels that can be used to purchase the 10 Gold Weapons in the game—assuming you can find the two hidden shops that sell them, that is.

FIRST SHOP



The first Gold Weapon Shop can be found on Gemlik Base: Oltanis Orbit, at the top of the tall tower at the very end of the level near the spaceship hanger.



To get to the top of the tower, use you wall jump technique until you reach a platform with an elevator. Ride the elevator to the top, and you should find a room where five Gold Weapons are on display for sale.

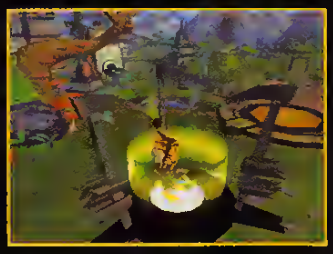


Each weapon costs 4 Gold Bolts and 10,000 regular bolts. The first five Gold Weapons available are: Bomb Glove, Pyrocitor, Blaster, Glove of Doom, and Suck Cannon.

SECOND SHOP



The final five Gold Weapons aren't available until you beat the game. When you do, you're presented with an option to start over or continue from just before the final battle. Choose "Start new game with current weapons and bolts"—when you do, an "R1" icon appears next to the save slot where you save your new game denoting that you have beaten the final boss.



Get past the first level, and you should arrive at Tobruk Crater in Novalis. Look for a teleport platform right next to your ship.



The pad leads to a room selling all 10 Gold Weapons—the final five are the Tesla Claw, Mine Glove, Morph-A-Ray, Decoy Glove, and Devastator.



Gadgetron Vendor: This is where you can purchase new weapons and ammo.



Golden Bolt: Collect these to purchase Gold Weapons at the two shops located in Gemlik Base and Novalis



Infobot: Find one of these to gain access to a new map.



Starting Point: This shows where Ratchet & Clank start when their spaceship first arrives on a map

Secret Area: Any area that's shaded green designates a Secret Area, not visible on your map

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run kick dive sing jump catch play leap flip try dream turn spin go laugh.

TOBRUK CRATER: NOVALIS



OUTPOST X11: ARIDIA



METROPOLIS: KERWAN



LOGGING SITE: EUDORA



BLARG STATION: NEBULA G34



BLACKWATER CITY: RILGAR



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GEMLIK BASE: OLTANIS ORBIT



GORDA CITY RUINS: OLTANIS



ROBOT PLANT: QUARTU



GADGETRON SITE: KALEBO III

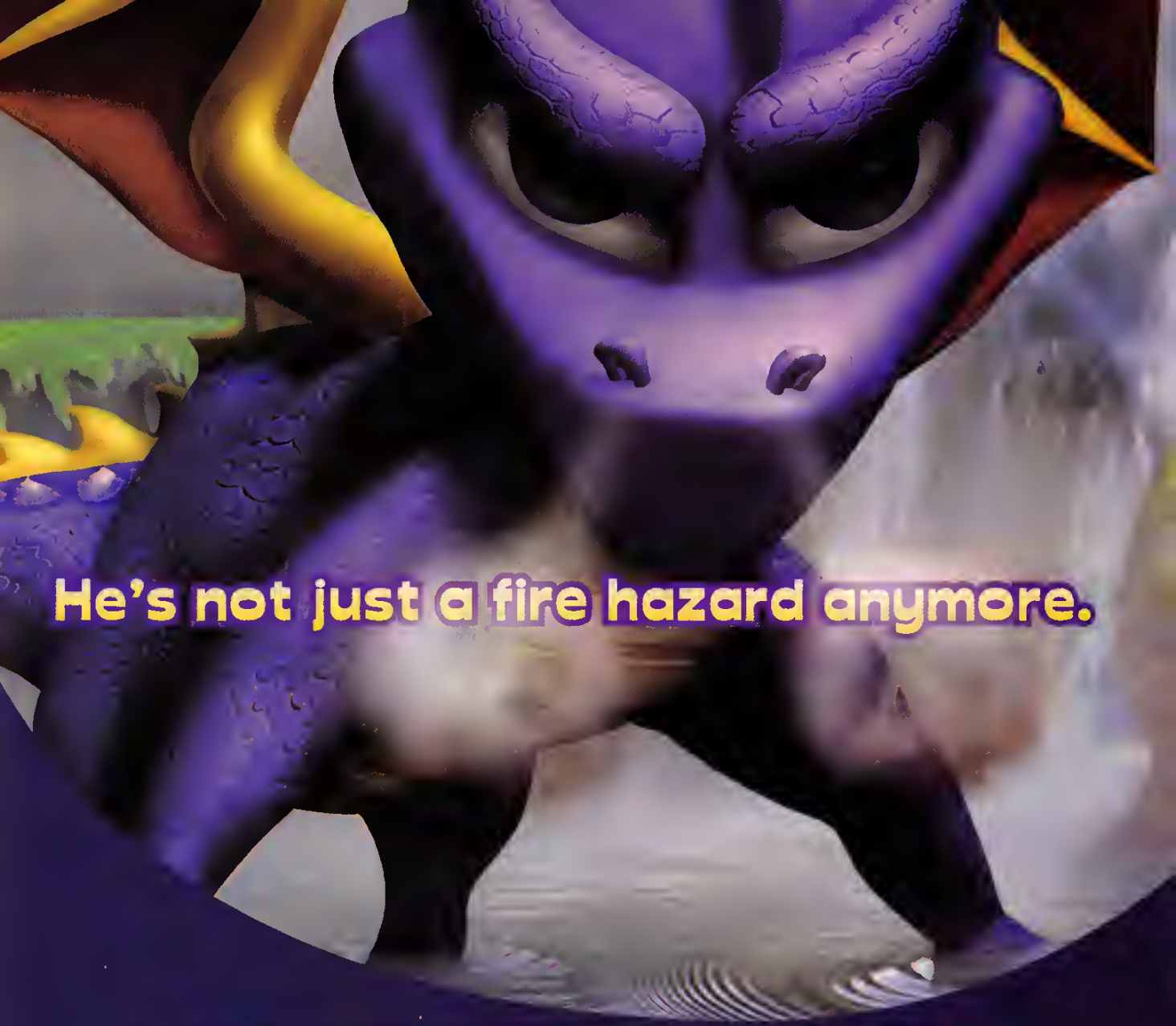


DREK'S FLEET: VELDIN ORBIT



KYZIL PLATEAU: VELDIN





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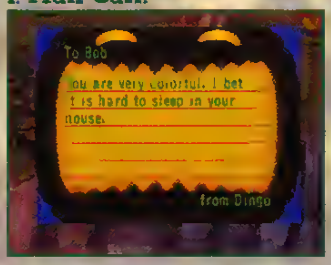
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20 Things You Need To Know About... Animal Crossing

Nintendo's Animal Crossing is an unusual game that requires unusual strategy. Here are some ProTips for maximum earnings and harmonious living.

By The Residents of GamePro

1. Mail Call!



Writing letters can be tricky. Use short sentences and words your neighbors are likely to recognize ("friend," names of objects, the name of the town), and you will get good responses. If your letters are confusing, your friends will write back with an annoyed or confused note. Meanwhile, the museum doesn't read your letter at all; it's only concerned with the fossil attachment. Type one character and mail the thing away.

2. Fresh 'n' Fruity



One fruit (pear, cherry, orange, apple, or peach) is indigenous to your town; you can sell it to Tom for 100 bells. Coconuts grow on your island, and they're worth 150 if you bring them back to sell. You can grow coconuts on the mainland, too, but the trees must be planted near the shoreline. Any other fruit you acquire and plant is considered exotic and will sell for 500 bells each at Tom's store—even if you plant that fruit outside his shop! Plant the first few specimens of each fruit you find for early easy money.

3. Bee Prepared



Shaking trees is a risky but lucrative pastime. Several things can fall from the branches: fruit, money, furniture, or insects. Three trees every day hide a nest of bees. If a hive falls out, you have two options: run into the nearest house to avoid them, or face them with your net and try to catch one—they're worth a lot of money to Tom (and the museum would like a specimen, too). Catching a bee is very difficult but it can be done. If the bees catch you instead, you'll be stung and have to endure a swollen face for several hours. Regardless of what some townspeople may say, it does go away. If you've been stung once, you might as well find the other two hives and try again.

4. The Treasure Rock



One rock every day is a secret treasure rock. When you hit the rock with a shovel, it turns red and spits out a money bag. It only stays red for a few seconds, but the more you can hit it during that time, the more cash pops out. (Hitting a rock with your shovel will also get you an insect—the pill bug.) Move fast, and you can hit it six times, usually collecting over 3000 bells a day.

5. Financially Shaky



The sparkle spot shows up daily, too. Dig there and you'll find free cash, anywhere from 1000 to 30,000 bells. If you bury some money in one of those spots, you can grow a money tree that offers you three bags of bells instead of fruit. You can bury up to 30,000 bells and triple your investment, but the tree only blooms once, and you can't make infinite money from a money tree.

6. A Special Spade



If you bury a shovel in the sparkle spot, you'll grow a gold tree that, when fully grown and shaken, yields a golden shovel. This shovel lets you dig up hidden bags of bells, randomly buried around town.

7. Seeing Through Solid Objects



Sometimes it's hard to locate digging spots behind solid objects like trees or buildings. If you want to get a good look at the land behind an obstruction, take something common, such as a sheet of paper, and bury it where you can't see. Immediately dig it up and the camera will zoom in, at which time you can survey the land.

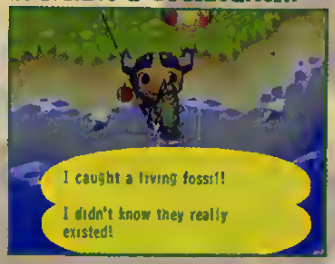
8. Something Fishy



When you go fishing, the water "restocks" every time you leave or enter an acre on the map. (Your island is only two acres wide.) If you leave and come back too quickly without trying to catch the fish, he'll stay there. You can run near the fish to scare him off.



9. What's a Coelacanth?



The rarest and most valuable fish in the game is the coelacanth. A living fossil, it can only be caught in the sea at night when it's raining. Tom pays 15,000 bells for a single coelacanth! You can tell if you're likely to catch one by watching the shadows underwater, the coelacanth is larger than most of the other fish in the sea.

10. Temporary Extra Storage



If you're cramped for item space but you have some stationery, create some letters to friends or the museum, then temporarily store some of your overflow items as presents. As long as you don't send the letters, you can pull the items back out later, once you've freed up space.

11. Interior Decorating



You know the HRA likes coordinated furniture, floor, and wallpaper themes, but there's more to the interior decorating trade than that. The arrangement of furniture in your house determines your "luck" in getting money and rare items. Yellow furniture goes on the west side of the house, green things go on the south side; orange up north; and red on the east.

12. Watch Your Wallet



Be wary of carrying too much money around with you. Sometimes a discussion with a townsperson will result in them taking half of your available cash for a favor they choose to do for you, or an item they forcibly sell you. Better to pay off Tom Nook every 10,000 or so, or drop some bags off at home.

13. What's the Password? Again?



If a friend sends you an item via a password, you can enter that password multiple times to get multiple items without penalty. Tom never knows the difference—he just coughs up another of that exact item. The catch: You can only do it once per code per day.

14. Isle Be Seeing You



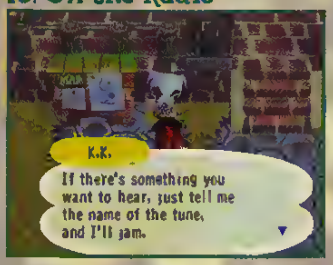
If you connect your Game Boy Advance to the GameCube, you can visit an island south of your town. The island is named whatever you choose and features a second house for your stuff. It's always summer on the island though it often rains. Try taking fruit from the mainland to the island, dropping it on the ground, downloading the game to the GBA, and then heading back to the mainland. Your little GBA friend will eat the fruit and—if he likes that type enough—drop sacks of money on the ground! Figure out his favorite fruit and you could get rich quick. You can give him tools, too—a fishing pole to fish, a net to grab the random items that come floating by, and a shovel so he buries random things for you. Just make sure you return to the island to get all this stuff before you turn off your GBA!

15. Prêt-à-Portable



GBA discount! If you connect your GBA to the GameCube in the Able Sisters' shop, you can download a design program that lets you create patterns for shirts, umbrellas, walls, floors, and doors on your handheld. When you upload these patterns, you are not charged the 350 bells that you would be charged if you designed them on the GameCube's design screen.

16. On the Radio



K.K. plays songs every Saturday from 8 p.m. to midnight at the train station. Each week, you can collect one new song, whether it's one K.K. chooses or a specific request. If you've heard a song around town that you like, enter the name exactly (the titles are case-sensitive) and K.K. will sing that song and give it to you when he's done, so you can play it on your home equipment.

17. Up, Up, and Away



Swatting at those floating present balloons with your net makes sense in theory, but it's futile. Just wait for the present to land in a tree and then shake it down!

18. Castaways?



You may find a character washed up on the beach from time to time. If you interact with them a few times, they'll wake up and offer you a reward for saving their life. It's usually something rare and/or bizarre, so it's worth it.

19. Those Weird, Noisy -Oid Thingies



You're more likely to dig up -oid creatures instead of fossils the day after a big rain shower.

20. Petey's Route



If you stand outside your house at 9 a.m. or 5 p.m., Petey the mail carrier will show up on his mail-carrying route—here's your chance to talk to him and get all the juicy details of his love life (or lack thereof). Of course, if he doesn't have any mail for you, he won't show—so keep up with your correspondence!




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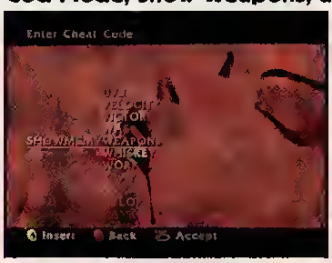
At the main menu, highlight "Versus," **press and hold L, press and hold B, and then press and hold R. Release the buttons one at a time in the following order: B, R, L.** If done correctly, a cheat menu will appear. Enter the following codes to unlock these cheats. When you enter the correct code, Godzilla will roar.

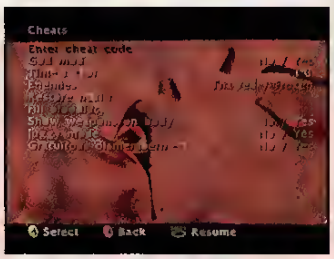
11 Continues in Adventure Mode	760611
All Cities:	480148
All Monsters (Except Orga)	696924
All Players Are Invisible:	316022
All Players Are Invulnerable	505634
All Players Are Tiny:	174204
All Players Inflict 4x Damage	817683
Black and White Mode:	567980
Disable Military:	256806
Display Game Version in Options:	097401
End Credits:	176542
Indestructible Buildings:	112122
No Energy Power-ups	413403
No Freeze Tanks:	841720
No Health Power-ups	562142
No Mothra Power-ups:	134615
No Rage Power-ups	119702
Player Indicators On:	135984
Player One—4x Damage	511012
Player One—Invulnerable:	843901
Player One—One Time Energy	650867
Player One—Rage Mode:	649640
Player One—Tiny	986875
Player One—Unlimited Energy:	677251
Player Two—4x Damage	815480
Player Two—Invisible:	459113
Player Two—Invulnerable	706149
Player Two—Rage Mode:	122224
Player Two—Tiny	971934
Player Two—Unlimited Energy:	435976
Player Three—4x Damage:	212454
Player Three—Invulnerable:	188522
Player Three—Rage Mode	548053
Player Three—Tiny:	895636
Player Three—Unlimited Energy	603696
Player Four—Invulnerable:	286552
Player Four—Rage Mode	451242
Player Four—Tiny:	795735
Player Four—Unlimited Energy	291680
Remove Displays	443253
Slow Health Regeneration	492877
Technicolor Mode:	661334
Throwable Buildings and Objects:	756287
Unlock Destoroyah:	537084
Unlock Godzilla 2000	225133
Unlock King Ghidorah:	877467
Unlock Mecha-Ghidorah	557456
Unlock Mechagodzilla:	131008
Unlock Rodan:	104332

Snake Kwitz—Wantauga, TX

BLOODRAYNE

God Mode, Show Weapons, and More





Pause the game and then enter Cheats. At the Cheats menu, select Enter Cheat Code and enter any of the following passwords at the Enter Cheat Code screen to activate the corresponding cheat.

Enemies Thawed/Frozen	DONTFARTONOSCAR
Fill Bloodlust:	ANGRYXXXINSANEHOOKER
God Mode	TRIASSASSINDONTDIE
Gratuitous Dismemberment:	INSANEGIBSMODEGOOD
Juggy Mode	JUGGYDANCESQUAD
Restore Health:	LAMEYANKEEDONTFEED
Show Weapons	SHOWMEMYWEAPONS
Time Factor:	NAKEDNASTYDISHWASHERDANCE

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GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

Armor Cheat, Slow Motion Mode, and More





Enter the following codes during gameplay and not while the game is paused. When a code is entered correctly, "Cheat Activated" will appear in the upper left corner of the screen.

All Cars Explode: Press R2, L2, R1, L1, L2, R2, □, △, ○, △, L2, L1.

Armor Cheat: Press R1, R2, L1, ×, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up.

Bloodring Banger (I): Press Up, Right, Right, L1, Right, Up, □, L2.

Bloodring Bangar (II): Press Down, R1, ○, L2, L2, ×, R1, L1, Left, Left.

Caddy: Press ○, L1, Up, R1, L2, ×, R1, L1, ○, ×.

Crazy Pedestrians: Press Down, Up, Up, Up, ×, R2, R1, L2, L2.

Faster Play Time: Press ○, ○, L1, □, L1, □, □, □, L1, △, ○, △.

Flying Cars: Press Right, R2, ○, R1, L2, Down, L1, R1.
*Note: While accelerating, **press and hold Down** on the left analog stick to fly*

Girls Follow You: Press ○, ×, L1, L1, R2, ×, ×, ○, △.

Health Cheat: Press R1, R2, L1, ○, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up.

Hotring Racer (I): Press R1, ○, R2, Right, L1, L2, ×, ×, □, R1.

Hotring Racer (II): Press R2, L1, ○, Right, L1, R1, Right, Up, ○, R2.

Play as Candy Suxxx: Press ○, R2, Down, R1, Left, Right, R1, L1, ×, L2.

Play as Hilary: Press R1, ○, R2, L1, Right, R1, L1, ×, R2.

Play as Kan Rosenberg: Press Right, L1, Up, L2, L1, Right, R1, L1, ×, R1.

Play as Lance Vance: Press ○, L2, Left, ×, R1, L1, ×, L1.

Play as Love Fist Band Member (I): Press Down, L1, Down, L2, Left, ×, R1, L1, ×, ×.

Play as Lova Fist Band Mamber (II): Press R1, L2, R2, L1, Right, R2, Left, ×, □, L1.

Play as Mercedes: Press R2, L1, Up, L1, Right, R1, Right, Up, ○, △.

Play as Phil Cassidy: Press Right, R1, Up, R2, L1, Right, R1, L1, Right, ○.

Play as Ricardo Diaz: Press L1, L2, R1, R2, Down, L1, R2, L2.

Play as Sonny Forelli: Press ○, L1, ○, L2, Left, ×, R1, L1, ×, ×.

Rhino Tank: Press ○, ○, L1, ○, ○, ○, L1, L2, R1, △, ○, △.

Romero's Hearse: Press Down, R2, Down, R1, L2, Left, R1, L1, Left, Right.

Sabre Turbo: Press Right, L2, Down, L2, L2, ×, R1, L1, ○, Left.

Slow Motion Mode: Press △, Up, Right, Down, □, R2, R1.

Suicide: Press Right, L2, Down, R1, Left, Left, R1, L1, L2, L1.

Suit-and-Tie Attire: Press Right, Right, Left, Up, L1, L2, Left, Up, Down, Right.

Trashmaster: Press ○, R1, ○, R1, Laft, Laft, R1, L1, ○, Right.

Wanted Level Down One Star: Press R1, R1, ○, R2, Up, Down, Up, Down, Up, Down.

Wanted Level Up One Star: Press R1, R1, ○, R2, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right.

Weapon Cheat (I): Press R1, R2, L1, R2, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right.

Weapon Cheat (II): Press R1, R2, L1, R2, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Down, Left.

Weapon Cheat (III): Press R1, R2, L1, R2, Left, Down, Right, Up, Laft, Down, Down, Down.

Weathar Is Foggy (I): Press R2, ×, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2, ×.

Weathar Is Foggy (II): Press R2, ×, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2, □.

Weather Is Normal: Press R2, ×, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2, Down.

Weathar Is Rainy: Press R2, ×, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2, L2, ○.

Weather Is Sunny: Press R2, ×, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2, △.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

Restore Health, Restore Missiles, and More





Pause the game, **simultaneously press and hold L1, L2, R1, and R2**, and then enter the following codes to unlock these cheats. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound.

Note: You must beat the game to activate codes designated with a "".*

1000 Exp: Press ×, Down, Down, Down.

***All Skills:** Press △, ○, △, ○.

***Always Devastating:** Press □, □, ○, ○.

***Infinite Missiles:** Press □, ○, ×, △.

***Invulnerable:** Press △, □, ×, ○.

Level 2 Skills: Press ○, Right, ○, Right.

Level 3 Skills: Press △, Up, △, Up.

Level 4 Skills: Press □, Left, □, Left.

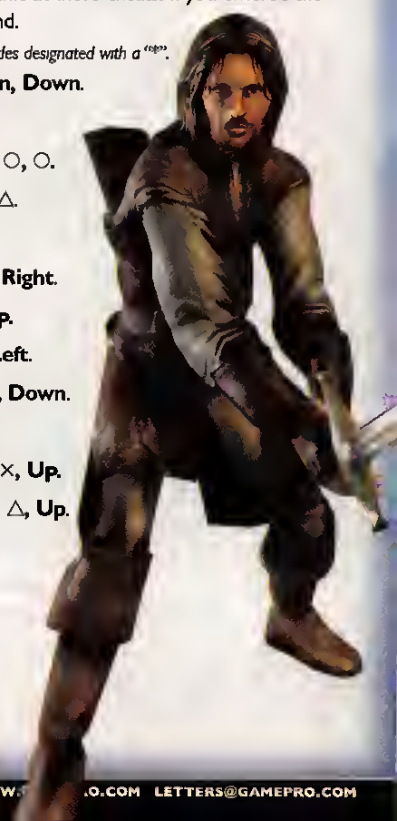
Level 5 Skills: Press ×, ×, Down, Down.

***Mini-Enemies:** Press △, △, ×, ×.

Restore Health: Press △, Down, ×, Up.

Restore Missiles: Press ×, Down, △, Up.

***Slow-Mo:** Press △, ○, ×, □.



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HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN

Complete Level, Lethal Charge, and More




During gameplay, quickly enter the following codes to unlock these cheats. If you entered the code correctly, the name of the cheat will appear onscreen.

Bomb: Press R2, L2, Up, Down, ×, Up, L1.

Complete Level: Press R2, L2, Up, Down, ×, L3, ○, ×, ○, ×.

Full Life: Press R2, L2, Up, Down, ×, Up, Down.

Gravity: Press R2, L2, Up, Down, ×, L2, L2.

Lethal Charge: Press R2, L2, Up, Down, ×, R1, R1.

MegaForce: Press R2, L2, Up, Down, ×, R2, R2.

Nailgun: Press R2, L2, Up, Down, ×, L1, L1.

Slomo: Press R2, L2, Up, Down, ×, Up, L2.

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN

God Mode, Level Select, and More

During gameplay, quickly enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheat. If you entered the code correctly, the name of the cheat will appear onscreen.

All Weapons: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, Up, X, A.

Bomb: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, Up, White

Complete Level: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, Left Thumbstick, B, A, B, A.

Full Life: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, Up, Down.

God Mode: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, R, L, Black, White.

Gravity: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, L, L.

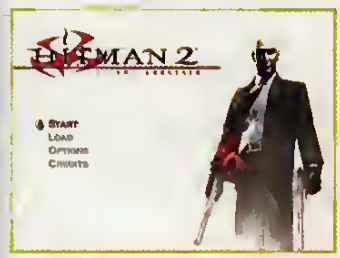
Hitman All: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, Up, Up.

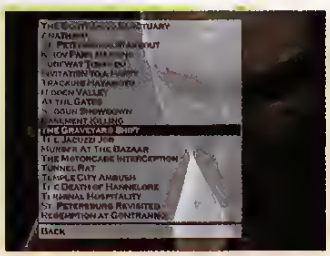
Lethal Charge: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, Black, Black.

MegaForce: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, R, R.

Nailgun: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, White, White.

Slomo: Press R, L, Up, Down, A, Up, L.

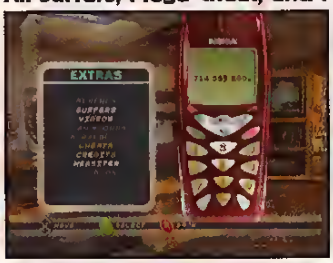




Level Select: At the main menu, press R, L, Up, Down, A, Left Thumbstick, X, Y, B. If you entered the code correctly, a level select menu will appear onscreen.

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER

All Surfers, Mega Cheat, and More





At the main menu, choose Extras, and at the Extras menu, select Cheats. Select Enter Code and then enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the code correctly, "New Cheat Unlocked" will appear onscreen. Select Toggle Cheat to activate the cheat.

All Levels:	3285554497
All Suits:	7025552918
All Surfers:	9495556799
All Tricks:	6265556043
First-Person View:	8775553825
High Jumps:	2175550217
Maximum Stats	2125551776
Mega Cheat:	7145558092
Trippy Mode	8185551447
Unlock Freak:	3105556217
Unlock Pastrana	8005556292
Unlock Tiki God:	8885554506
Unlock Tony Hawk:	3235559787

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

Unlock Cars





At the Main Menu, enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cars. If you entered the code correctly, the name of the unlocked car will appear onscreen.

Aston Martin V12 Vanquish: Press R2, Right, R2, Right, △, Left, △, Left.

BMW Z8: Press □, Right, □, Right, R2, △, R2, △.

Chevrolet Corvette Z06: Press Left, R2, Left, R2, L1, R1, L1, R1.

Ferrari F50: Press L1, △, L1, △, Right, L2, Right, L2.

Ferrari F550: Press L1, □, L1, □, Right, R1, Right, R1.

Ford TS50: Press Right, Left, Right, Left, R2, □, R2, □.

HVS Coupe GTS: Press L1, L2, L1, L2, R1, △, R1, △.

Lemborghini Diablo 6.0 VT: Press Right, R2, Right, R2, R1, L1, R1, L1.

Lotus Elise: Press △, R2, △, R2, Left, □, Left, □.

McLaren F1 LM: Press □, L1, □, L1, △, Right, △, Right.

Porsche Carrera GT: Press Left, Right, Left, Right, R1, R2, R1, R2.

Pursuit Mustang Cobra R: Press Left, □, Left, □, R2, R1, R2, R1.

X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION

Unlock Everything





At the main menu, **press and hold L1 and then press Right, Right, Left, Left, Down, Up,** ○. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear onscreen and everything will be unlocked.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

Infinite Ammo, Health, and Ring Use





During gameplay, quickly enter the following codes to unlock these cheats. If done correctly, the name of the cheat will appear onscreen.

Infinite Ammo: Press X, B, Y, A, X, B.

Infinite Health: Press Y, A, X, B, A, Y.

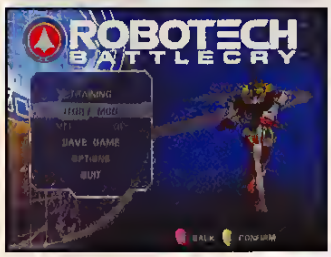
Infinite Ring Use: Press Y, B, A, B, Y, X

ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY

Invincibility









At the main menu, select Training, and at the Training screen, select Veritech fighter training. When you reach the target-shooting portion of the training, destroy the first two targets and then quit out of Training. Select Story mode, and if you have done everything correctly, you'll be invincible.

OFFICIAL RULES FOR CANDYSTAND OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT CONTEST

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN

1. Contest begins 12:00AM Eastern Time ("ET") November 1, 2002 and ends 11:59PM ET January 31, 2003 ("Contest Period").

2. Open only to legal residents of the 50 United States and the District of Columbia. Participants are not eligible to win a Grand Prize in the Candystand Open Golf Tournament game if they have won a Grand Prize playing another game on the Candystand website (*game*) in the 90 days preceding the commencement of this Contest. MINORS: IF YOU ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 18, YOU SHOULD OBTAIN YOUR PARENT'S OR LEGAL GUARDIAN'S CONSENT BEFORE PARTICIPATING. IN THE EVENT AN E-MAIL ADDRESS IS REQUESTED, MINORS UNDER THE AGE OF 13 WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THEIR PARENT'S OR LEGAL GUARDIAN'S E-MAIL ADDRESS. IN NO EVENT WILL A MINOR UNDER THE AGE OF 13 BE PERMITTED TO POST HIS/HER OWN NAME WHEN PARTICIPATING. IF A SCREEN NAME IS REQUESTED, THESE MINORS WILL BE REQUIRED TO SELECT A GENERIC SCREEN NAME FROM A LIST DEVELOPED IN ADVANCE BY SPONSOR. ANY MINOR SELECTED AS A WINNER WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE SPONSOR WITH A PARENT PERMISSION FORM WHICH WILL BE SENT TO THE E-MAIL ADDRESS PROVIDED (WHICH MUST INCLUDE A PARENT'S OR LEGAL GUARDIAN'S APPROVAL AND SIGNATURE) RETURNED BY MAIL TO "CANDYSTAND OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT-PARENT PERMISSION", P.O. BOX 393, PINE BROOK, NJ 07058 OR FAX 973-808-6861 WITHIN FOURTEEN (14) DAYS OF ISSUANCE OF THAT FORM. IF SUCH MINOR DOES NOT RETURN A COMPLETED PARENT PERMISSION FORM WITHIN THIS PERIOD, HE/SHE WILL FORFEIT HIS/HER RIGHT TO BE DECLARED A WINNER AND/OR WIN A PRIZE AND AN ALTERNATE WINNER WILL BE SELECTED.

3. To enter the Contest, play the Candystand Open Golf Tournament game at www.Candystand.com. The top one hundred fifty (150) scorers ranked from among all participants who have played the game during the Contest Period will have their score posted on the site. In addition, the top three hundred (300) scorers at the end of the Contest Period will be entered into a random drawing for a chance to win one (1) Grand Prize Pack or one (1) of twenty-five (25) First Prizes. Grand Prize Pack consists of: one (1) Golden Tee Fore! Arcade Game (estimated retail value $4,499.00) and a 2-Year Subscription to GamePro Magazine (estimated retail value $33.97). Total estimated retail value of Grand Prize Pack $4,532.97. Each First Prize consists of a 1-Year Subscription to GamePro Magazine (estimated retail value $17.97). Total estimated retail value of all prizes combined $4,982.22. In the event one of the top three hundred (300) scorers is under the age of 13, he/she will not be permitted to post his/her own name, but instead will select a generic screen name from a list that has been developed in advance by Sponsor. In the event there is a tie such that more than one participant has one of the top 300 scores, each of the tied participants will be entered into the drawing mentioned above in the order in which the participants completed the game provided that in no event will there be more than a total of 450 participants entered in the random drawing. Scores from each game may only be submitted online once. Duplicate submissions for the same game will result in disqualification of all submissions for that game.

4. The winner(s) will be chosen at random from the top three hundred (300) scorers (subject to rule #3 above). Winner(s) will be chosen by an independent judging organization whose decisions will be final. Winner(s) will be notified by e-mail. In the event that any e-mail to a potential winner is returned as undeliverable or a response is not received to a given e-mail within three (3) days of its issuance, the prize may be forfeited and an alternate winner may be selected. The odds of winning depend upon the number of participants playing the Candystand Open Golf Tournament game and the skill at playing such game.

5. If your score is among the top three hundred (300) scores, you will be asked to provide your screen name and e-mail address in order to be eligible to be entered in the drawing. Minors under the age of 13 will instead be asked to provide their parent's or legal guardian's e-mail address. Subject to the terms of these rules, your score must be one of the top three hundred (300) at the conclusion of the Contest Period to be included in this drawing. Participants must provide a valid e-mail address or be disqualified. Any minor should also receive permission from his/her parent or legal guardian in order to enter the drawing and must follow the instructions provided in paragraph 2 of these rules. Any prize won by a minor will be awarded in the name of his/her parent or legal guardian. Winner(s) (and the parent or legal guardian of any minor winner) may be required, in the sole discretion of the judges, to sign and return an affidavit of eligibility and a liability release and, where legal, a publicity release within fourteen (14) days of issuance of those documents or prize will be forfeited and awarded to an alternate winner. Prize is not transferable or substitutable except Sponsor retains the right to substitute a prize of equal or greater value if stated prize is not available. Winner(s) shall be solely responsible for any federal, state or local taxes and any other expenses not specified in these rules.

6. Employees of Kraft Foods North America, Inc., Trymark Consulting Group, L.L.C., Skyworks Technologies, Inc. and their respective parents, affiliates, subsidiary companies, retailers, distributors and suppliers (collectively "Sponsor and Related Parties"), and members of their immediate families (and those in their household) are not eligible to enter.

7. By accepting prize, winner(s) consent to the use of their name and/or likeness by Sponsor and its designees for advertising, promotional and other purposes without compensation or notification (except where prohibited by law).

8. By entering, entrants agree that Sponsor and Related Parties shall have no liability and shall be held harmless for any damage, loss or injury resulting from participation in this Contest or the use or misuse of any prize.

9. Sponsor and Related Parties are not responsible for lost, interrupted or unavailable network, server or other connections, miscommunications, failed phone, computer or telephone transmissions or technical failure (jumbled, scrambled or misdirected transmissions, or other errors of any kind whether human, mechanical, electronic or otherwise) or for any damage to entrant's or other person's hardware or software as a result of participation. In the event of a dispute as to identity of entrant, entrant will be deemed the account holder of the e-mail address submitted at the time of entry. Persons found tampering with or abusing any aspect of this Contest as solely determined by the judges will be disqualified. Every submission must be manually keystroked and manually entered by the individual participant and repetitive automated electronic submission of entries is specifically disallowed. In the event the Contest is compromised by virus, bugs, non-authorized human intervention or other causes beyond the control of Sponsor which corrupts or impairs the administration, security, fairness or proper play of the Contest, Sponsor reserves the right in its sole discretion to suspend or terminate the Contest or any portion thereof and/or terminate the participation of any participant (and void his/her entries) whose conduct potentially compromises the Contest.

10. All decisions of Kraft Foods North America, Inc. relating to the Contest are final.

11. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All applicable laws apply.

12. You may request a copy of these rules and/or the identity of the winner(s) by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Candystand Open Golf Tournament—Winners/Rules, P.O. Box 393, Pine Brook, NJ 07058 for receipt no later than March 31, 2003.

Sponsor: Kraft Foods North America, Inc., 100 DeForest Ave., East Hanover, NJ 07936.

Promoter: Trymark Consulting Group, L.L.C., P.O. Box 393, Pine Brook, NJ 07058.

NASCAR THUNDER 2003

Unlock Tiburon Track




Create a save file for a 2003 EA Sports game on your hard drive or memory card and then insert the NASCAR Thunder 2003 game disc. If done correctly, you will receive the Tiburon International Speedway track when you go to the main menu.

RAYMAN ARENA

Old TV Screen, Unlock Every Battle Mode, and More




Start a new game, and enter the following file names to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the code correctly, the name of the cheat will appear onscreen.

Old TV Screen:	OLDTV
Unlock Every Battle Mode:	ALLFISH
Unlock Every Character:	PUPPETS
Unlock Every Mode:	ALLRAYMANM
Unlock Every Skin:	CARNIVAL

SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS

Infinite Superpower, Unlock Movies, and More




At the main menu, select Options, and at the options screen, choose Cheat Menu. At the cheat entry screen, enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the code correctly, the name of the cheat will appear onscreen.

Note: A "_" designates a blank space.

Hard Mode:	BIZARRO
Infinite Health:	SMALLVILLE
Infinite Superpower:	JOR_EL
Unlock Biographies:	LARA
Unlock Everything:	MXYZPTLK
Unlock Movies:	LANA_LANG

NBA LIVE 2003

Hidden Players









At the main menu, choose Team Management, and at the Team Management screen, select Roster Management. At the Roster Management screen, choose Create Player. Enter the following as last names to unlock these hidden players, and, if done correctly, the name of the unlocked player will appear onscreen.

Note: The Ghetto Fabulous code does not work in the PlayStation 2 and GameCube versions.

Busta Rhymes:	FLIPMODE
DJ Clue:	MIXTAPES
Ghetto Fabulous:	GHETTO
Hot Karl:	CALIFORNIA
Just Blaze:	GOODBEATS

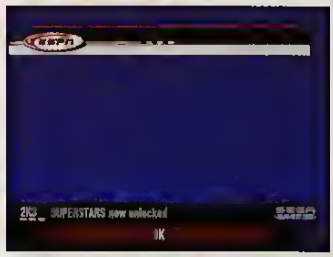
NBA 2K3

Unlock Superstars Teams









At the Main Menu, choose Options, and at the Options menu, select Game Play. At the Game Play screen, **press and hold Left on the directional pad and then press and hold Right on the Left Thumbstick. While holding both, press Start.** If done correctly, a Codes option will be available when you return to the Options menu. Select it, and enter MEGASTARS (password is case-sensitive) as a code to unlock Superstars Teams.

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GAMEPRO'S 12th ANNUAL READERS' CHOICE AWARDS OFFICIAL RULES AND CONDITIONS:

1 NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN

2 To Enter: Complete the entry ballot in *GamePro*'s 12th Annual Readers' Choice Awards feature in the January 2003 issue (see page 48) or hand print your name, complete address including zip code, age (on date of entry), gender, complete daytime phone number with area code, and e-mail address (if available) on a 3" x 5" card and mail in a first class stamped envelope to GamePro's 12th Annual Readers' Choice Awards, PO Box 23040, Oakland, CA 94623-0040. Via the Internet, go to www.gamepro.com and complete *GamePro*'s 12th Annual Readers' Choice Awards ballot and hit the send button at the bottom of the page. Limit one (1) entry per person regardless of entry method. Sweepstakes begins at 12:01 AM (PST) on December 10, 2002. All entries must be received by 11:59 PM (PST) on January 31, 2003. By participating, entrant (and entrant's parent/legal guardian, if entrant is a minor) agrees to these Official Rules.

3 Drawing: Twenty three winners will be selected in a random drawing held on or about February 15, 2003 from all eligible entries received. Judges' decisions are final and binding in all matters. Winners will be notified by mail. Winners may not substitute, assign, transfer, or redeem prize for cash. Sponsors reserve right to substitute prize with prize of equal or greater value if advertised prize becomes unavailable.

4 Prizes: The following prizes (with corresponding estimated retail values) will be awarded: Three Grand Prize Winners will receive one of the following: A Sony PlayStation 2, Nintendo GameCube, or Microsoft Xbox. Specific console to be selected by GamePro. (ERV $199.99). Ten First Prize Winners will each receive a one-year subscription to *GamePro* magazine (ERV: $24.95). Ten Second Prize Winners will each receive a GamePro action figure (either Dr. Zombie or Dan Elektro) (ERV: $14.99). Total ERV of prizes is $999.37. Odds of winning depend on number of eligible entries received. If prize is won by Internet entry, winner will be deemed the subscriber to the Internet account, who must comply with all of these rules. Prize won by a minor may be awarded to parent/legal guardian. Limit of one (1) prize per person/household.

5 Eligibility: Sweepstakes is subject to all U.S. federal, state, and local laws and regulations and is void where prohibited, taxed, or restricted by law. Sweepstakes is open to legal residents age 13 or older of the contiguous 48 United States and Canada, including the District of Columbia and Quebec.

6 Employees of Sponsors and their affiliates, subsidiaries, distributors, retailers, and anyone involved with the design, production, execution, or distribution of Sponsors products or related promotional materials and their families are not eligible. Canadian residents, in order to be eligible to win, must first correctly answer a time-limited, skill-testing question administered by telephone.

7 General: Prize winners (and winner's parent/legal guardian, if winner is a minor) will be required to sign and return an affidavit of eligibility and liability release and where lawful, a publicity release within 14 days of notification or prize will be forfeited and awarded to alternate winner. If prize notification or prize is returned as non-deliverable, prize will be forfeited and an alternate winner selected. Neither the Sponsors nor any of their agencies are responsible for illegible, lost, late, damaged, incomplete, stolen, postage-due, or misdirected mail or entries, or for lost, interrupted, or unavailable network, server, or other connections, miscommunications, failed telephone, or computer or telephone transmissions, or technical failure, or jumbled, scrambled, or misdirected transmissions or other errors of any kind whether human, mechanical or electronic or for phone, electrical, network, computer hardware or software program malfunctions, failures, or difficulties or for ISP/network/website accessibility or unavailability. Persons found tampering with or abusing any aspect of this Sweepstakes, as solely determined by the Sponsors, will be disqualified. If disqualified for any tampering or abuses, Sponsors reserve the right to terminate entrant's eligibility to participate in Sweepstakes. In the event any portion of this Sweepstakes is compromised by virus, bugs, non-authorized human intervention, or other causes beyond the control of Sponsors which, in the sole opinion of the Sponsors, corrupts or impairs the administration, security, fairness, or proper submission of entries, Sponsors reserve the right at their sole discretion to suspend or terminate the Internet portion of the Sweepstakes and randomly select a winner from Internet entries received prior to the action taken and regular mail-in entries. Winner (and winner's parent/legal guardian, if winner is a minor) by acceptance of prize (a) agrees that Sponsors and their affiliate companies, parents, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies, and all of their respective officers, directors, employees, representatives, and agents will have no liability whatsoever for and shall be held harmless by winner against, any liability for any injuries, losses, or damages of any kind to persons, including death, or property resulting in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, from acceptance, possession, misuse or use of the prize, participation in this Sweepstakes or participation in any Sweepstakes related activity, and (b) except where legally prohibited, grants permission for Sponsors and those acting under their authority to use his/her name, photograph, voice and/or likeness for advertising and/or publicity purposes without additional compensation. Taxes solely the responsibility of winner. All decisions of Sponsors on all matters relating to this promotion are final. Unclaimed prizes will not be awarded. If an individual winner does not claim his or her prize by April 30, 2003, the prize will be forfeited back to the supplier. Prizes cannot be claimed after the Sweepstakes has been completed.

8 For names of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope for receipt by April 30, 2003 to GamePro's 12th Annual Readers' Choice Awards Winners, PO Box 23040, Oakland, CA 94623-0040.

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